CHRIST IN ART

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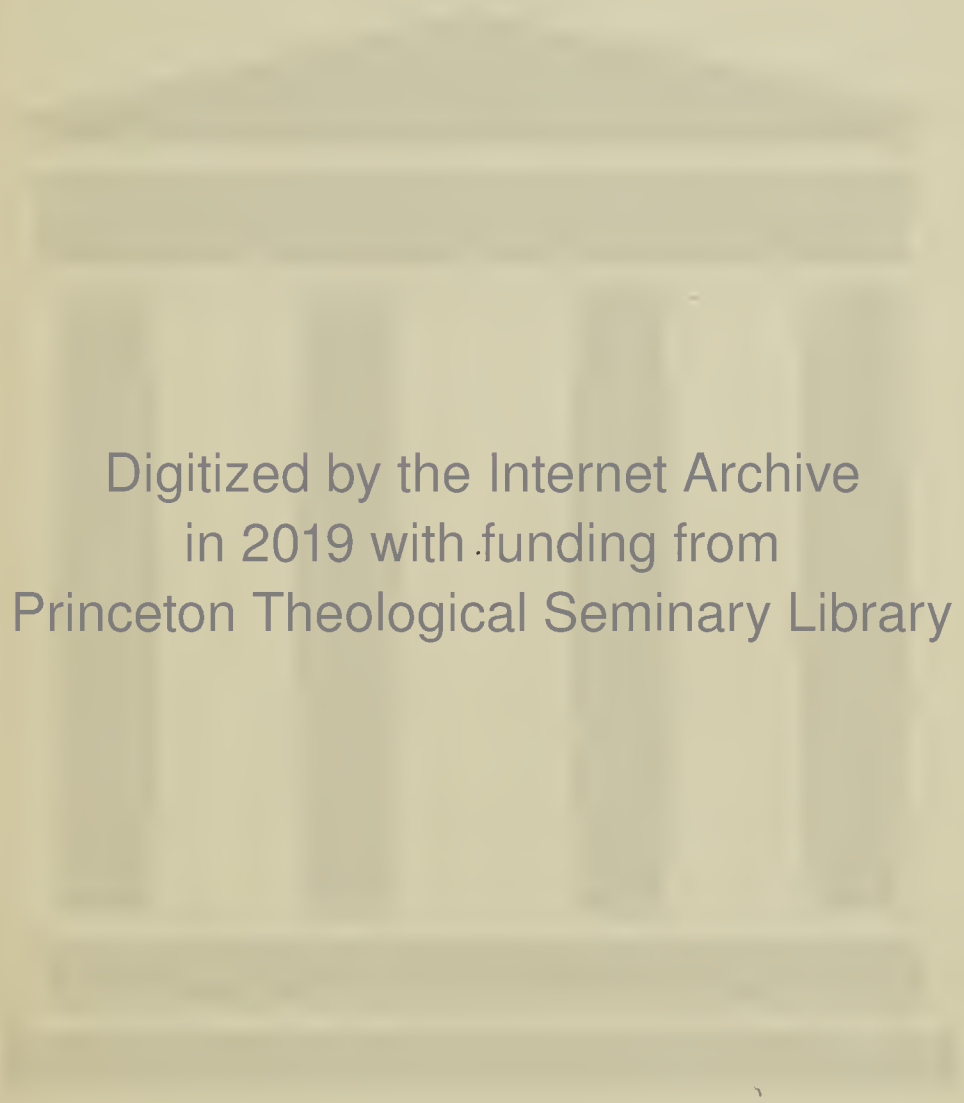

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CHRIST IN ART

HEAD OF CHRIST

From the Catacomb of S, Domitilla

CHRIST IN ART

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
FEB 1924
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BY

MRS. HENRY JENNER

WITH THIRTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . . *page* 1

CHAPTER I

PORTRAITS OF CHRIST

The possibility of a likeness existing—Verbal descriptions of Christ's appearance—The Letter of Lentulus—The painting in the catacomb of S. Domitilla—The bronze seen by Eusebius—The ideal representations—The beardless Christs—Glass medallions—The Veronica cloth—The traditional type 19

CHAPTER II

CATACOMBS

The art of the catacombs—The earliest series of the life of Christ—The Good Shepherd—The symbolical treatment of Christ—The historical treatment—The miracles—The development of the idea of the Good Shepherd—The sign of the Cross—The nimbus—Christian sarcophagi 36

CHAPTER III

MOSAICS

The art of mosaic—The form of the Christian church—Christ in glory, the predominant idea in the art of Constantine—The mosaics in Rome—The mosaics in Ravenna—The degradation of Christian art under Byzantine influence 53

CHAPTER IV

SCULPTURE, WALL-PAINTINGS, AND ILLUMINATIONS

The earliest representations of the Crucifixion—The fading of the early Roman benign type of Christ under Byzantine influence—Illuminations—MS. of S. Gregory Nazianzen—Eleventh-century wall-paintings—The revival of art in France—The sculptures of Chartres and Rheims . . . . *page* 71

CHAPTER V

THE RENAISSANCE

The influence of the Franciscans on Art—Giotto and his followers—Giotto's conception of Christ—The Sienese emotional painters—Orcagna's pessimism 84

CHAPTER VI

ITALIAN SCHOOLS

The influence of the Dominicans on art—Fra Angelico—The frescoes in S. Croce—Piero dei Franceschi—Signorelli—The Lippis and Botticelli—The Florentine school 97

CHAPTER VII

THE LOMBARDIC SCHOOLS

The great painters of space—Perugino—Pintoricchio—Luini, the painter of the beauty of Christ 111

CHAPTER VIII

VENETIAN SCHOOLS

Bellini and his protest against the luxuriousness of Venice—Carlo Crivelli—The cessation of the demand for the life of Christ in art—Giorgione—Titian—Tintoretto the last of the Seers of Venice . 121

CHAPTER IX

THE LATER ITALIAN SCHOOLS

Raphael the painter of the Madonna and Child—Correggio, Sodoma, and the downfall of religious art—Michael Angelo the supreme expression of the Renaissance—The later copyists—The Spanish painters Murillo and Velasquez . . . . *page* 136

CHAPTER X

THE GERMAN AND FLEMISH SCHOOLS

The materialism of the Teuton—The Van Eycks—Memling—Albert Dürer and his love of deformity—Rembrandt—Cranach—Rubens —Christ fades out of art 149

CHAPTER XI

MODERN ART

Holman Hunt and his vagueness—Tissot, Heinrich Hoffmann, Fritz von Uhde. Beraud. Thorwaldsen, and Ary Scheffer—The last new representation of Christ—The fanatical Workman of Munkácsy . 166

BIBLIOGRAPHY 175

INDEX 179

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It has not been found possible to obtain photographs for reproductions of the pictures by Munkácsy which are mentioned.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

HEAD OF CHRIST. From the Catacomb of S. Domitilla, Rome . . . . . *Frontispiece*
By kind permission of Sir Wyke-Bayliss, K.B.

STATUE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD. From the Christian Museum of the Lateran 7
From a photograph by Alinari.

CHRIST WITH SS. PETER AND PAUL. Gilded glass in the Vatican Library 29
From "Roma Sotterranea," by permission of the St. Anselm Society.

PORTRAIT OF CHRIST. San Silvestro in Capite, Rome . 33
From a drawing by T. Heaphy in the British Museum.

CHRIST ENTHRONED. From a sixth-century mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna 65
From a photograph by Alinari.

CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS, AND THE CRUCIFIXION. From a fifth-century ivory in the British Museum . . 72

THE ASCENSION. From a sixth-century Syriac Bible in the Bibliothèque Nationale 75
From C. R. Fleury's "De l'Evangile." By kind permission of H. R. de Fleury and A. Mame et fils, Tours.

WINGED CHRIST. Russian Icon "Blagoe Molchanie" . 78
From a modern copy in bronze.

THE NATIVITY. From a twelfth-century mosaic at Palermo 79
From a photograph by Alinari.

THE RESURRECTION (Harrowing of Hell). From a twelfth-century mosaic at Torcello 80
From a photograph by Alinari.

PAGE

LE BEAU DIEU D'AMIENS. In Amiens Cathedral . 82
From a photograph by A. Giraudon, Paris.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS. From the fresco by Giotto in the Arena Chapel, Padua 86
From a photograph by Naya.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST. From the painting by Duccio in the Duomo, Siena . . . 91
From a photograph by Alinari.

CHRIST AS JUDGE. From the fresco by Orcagna at Pisa 94
From a photograph by Brogi.

THE TRANSFIGURATION. From a fresco by Fra Angelico in San Marco, Florence 100
From a photograph by D. Anderson, Rome.

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST. From the painting by Piero dei Franceschi in the National Gallery . . . 104

THE ADORATION OF THE INFANT CHRIST. From the painting by Filippino Lippi 107
By kind permission of the Art and Book Company, Limited.

THE ENTOMBMENT. From the painting by Botticelli in the Old Pinakothek, Munich 108
From a photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI. From the painting by D. Ghirlandaio in the Chapel of the Innocenti, Florence 110
From a photograph by Alinari.

THE ASCENSION. From the painting by Pietro Perugino in Borgo San Sepulcro 113
From a photograph by Alinari.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT. From the fresco by Pintoricchio in S. Onofrio, Rome 116

CHRIST AS A YOUTH. From the painting by Luini in the Ambrosian Library, Milan 117
From a photograph by D. Anderson, Rome.

CHRIST UNBOUND FROM THE PILLAR. From the fresco by Luini in the Monasterio Maggiore, Milan . . 119
From a photograph by Brogi.

PAGE

PIETÀ. From the painting by Giovanni Bellini at Rimini 123
From a photograph by Alinari.

CHRIST CARRYING THE CROSS. From a painting by Giorgione 128
From a photograph by D. Anderson, Rome.

THE TRIBUTE MONEY. From the painting by Titian in the Dresden Gallery 130
From a photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

CHRIST BEFORE PILATE. From the painting by Tintoretto in the Scuola di San Rocco, Venice . . . 132
From a photograph by D. Anderson, Rome.

THE MADONNA DI CASA COLONNA. From the painting by Raphael in the Royal Gallery, Berlin . . . 136
From a photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN. From the painting after Correggio in the National Gallery . . . 138

HEAD OF CHRIST. From the painting by Andrea del Sarto in the Church of the Annunciation, Florence . . 140
From a photograph by Alinari.

THE HOLY FAMILY. From the painting by Murillo in the National Gallery 147
From a photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

THE CRUCIFIX. From the painting by Velasquez in the Prado Museum, Madrid 148
From a photograph by W. A. Mansell & Co.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH. From the painting by Jan van Eyck in the National Museum, Madrid . . 152
From a photograph by Laurent y Ca.

ECCE HOMO. From the painting by Roger van der Weyden in the National Gallery . . . 153

THE TRINITY. By Memling. From the Grimani Breviary in S. Mark's Library, Venice 155

THE HARROWING OF HELL. From the "Grosse Passion" of Albert Dürer 160

PAGE

LE BEAU DIEU D'AMIENS. In Amiens Cathedral . 82
From a photograph by A. Giraudon, Paris.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS. From the fresco by Giotto in the Arena Chapel, Padua 86
From a photograph by Naya.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST. From the painting by Duccio in the Duomo, Siena . . . 91
From a photograph by Alinari.

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THE TRANSFIGURATION. From a fresco by Fra Angelico in San Marco, Florence 100
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From a photograph by Alinari.

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From a photograph by Alinari.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT. From the fresco by Pintoricchio in S. Onofrio, Rome 116

CHRIST AS A YOUTH. From the painting by Luini in the Ambrosian Library, Milan 117
From a photograph by D. Anderson, Rome.

CHRIST UNBOUND FROM THE PILLAR. From the fresco by Luini in the Monasterio Maggiore, Milan . . 119
From a photograph by Brogi.

PAGE

PIETÀ. From the painting by Giovanni Bellini at Rimini 123
From a photograph by Alinari.

CHRIST CARRYING THE CROSS. From a painting by Giorgione 128
From a photograph by D. Anderson, Rome.

THE TRIBUTE MONEY. From the painting by Titian in the Dresden Gallery 130
From a photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

CHRIST BEFORE PILATE. From the painting by Tintoretto in the Scuola di San Rocco, Venice . . . 132
From a photograph by D. Anderson, Rome.

THE MADONNA DI CASA COLONNA. From the painting by Raphael in the Royal Gallery, Berlin . . . 136
From a photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN. From the painting after Correggio in the National Gallery . . . 138

HEAD OF CHRIST. From the painting by Andrea del Sarto in the Church of the Annunciation, Florence . . 140
From a photograph by Alinari.

THE HOLY FAMILY. From the painting by Murillo in the National Gallery 147
From a photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

THE CRUCIFIX. From the painting by Velasquez in the Prado Museum, Madrid 148
From a photograph by W. A. Mansell & Co.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH. From the painting by Jan van Eyck in the National Museum, Madrid . . 152
From a photograph by Laurent y Ca.

ECCE HOMO. From the painting by Roger van der Weyden in the National Gallery . . . 153

THE TRINITY. By Memling. From the Grimani Breviary in S. Mark's Library, Venice 155

THE HARROWING OF HELL. From the "Grosse Passion" of Albert Dürer 160

PAGE

CHRIST AT EMMAUS. From the painting by Rembrandt in the Louvre, Paris 164
From a photograph by Neurdein.

DIES DOMINI. From the painting by Sir E. Burne-Jones 168
From a photograph by F. Hollyer.

THE LAST SUPPER. From the painting by Fritz von Uhde 171
By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co.

CHRIST IN ART

INTRODUCTION

TO follow the history of the representation of Christ in art is to follow the course of religion in art. "Art for art's sake" was non-existent in the Christian world before the Renaissance. Christian art had for its aim the leading of the mind and heart of man, by the channel of his eyes, to the contemplation of his Redeemer. It unconsciously followed the words of an old writer, who says that the religion of the philosopher is the study of what *is*, for the most sublime worship that can be rendered to God is the knowledge of His works, because the knowledge of His works leads to the knowledge of Himself.

Art to the Christians before the Renaissance was frankly a medium for emotion. It is this childlike quality in the old artists' works which invests them with their peculiar value. They used form and colour as mere phenomena (not as possessing inherent value in themselves) by which to appeal to the spiritual qualities of man;

even Beauty was a handmaid, not the ultimate goal.

If what Mr. Berenson says is true, that religious emotion for many people is produced by a feeling of identification with the universe, the more convincing a picture is in actuality, the more religious it is. This actuality is something quite apart from mere likeness to nature, and must have something more than fidelity to externals. Form, colour, texture, etc., need the impress of the spirit, just as the clay of the human body needs the illuminating light of the mind to make a man other than an irrational animal. So the picture needs that impalpable thing—the artist's emotion—to make it a living reality.

To see how incontrovertible this is we have only to look at certain stages of Christian art. The greatest success of the greatest masters of technique fails to rouse such religious emotion as those early translators of humanity's most poignant agonies, Duccio, Giotto, and Lorenzetti. Take, for example, those wholly absorbed women who cluster at the foot of the cross in Duccio's "Crucifixion," whom the earthquake could not distract from their Lord, or those who so passionately embrace the dead Christ in the last ecstasy of grief in Lorenzetti's "Deposition."

To take an earlier instance, in that incomparable conception of Christ in the great mosaic in

SS. Cosmas and Damian in Rome, the materials are hard and inelastic, the drawing is faulty, there are even signs of approaching degradation in artistic handling, but where in all the world does Christ reign in nobler, heavenlier majesty than on that domed apse? There is scarcely an art student in London who could not draw a figure more anatomically correct, but it appears that the utmost the art of London can produce to-day in the way of representing Christ is a degraded man.

It has been my object in this small book to try and follow the gradual development of the delineation of Christ in art, from the faded frescoes of the catacombs to the easels of modern artists. In so short a space so great a subject can only be indicated by a few notes of the more prominent works of art in each generation. What has been left out is of the utmost interest and importance, and the treatment of those instances selected, I am only too well aware, has been inadequate. I can only hope that some far abler writer will follow this humble attempt, and give to the world a book more worthy of the subject.

I have been unable to find any work which regards the artistic treatment of Christ from a chronological point of view. The separate incidents of His life are more or less treated in this way, but I have met with no book which has endeavoured to show how man's wishes have

invariably moulded their conception of the Son of God. Men have portrayed Christ as they desired Him; full of love and benignity in the early ages of faith; harsh and forbidding when men were cruel; divinely beautiful when saints painted Him; a noble when courts represented the goal of human ambitions; effete and sentimental when men fell away from religion; a boor among boors when material prosperity was the goal of men's desires; a fanatical workman nowadays among the men to whom labour is degrading and heaven unknown.

It has been said somewhat rashly that art died before Christianity was born, but judging from certain few survivals of early Christian art, it was not so wholly dead that it could not have been revived had not the spirit of Christianity been at least indifferent to it.

Art was so inextricably involved in the religion of Greece and Rome that it had become the expression of that religion: to worship Beauty, as expressed in marble limbs, was to worship God.

Christianity, founded on the Crucifixion, demanded sacrifice, not that of incense, but the supreme sacrifice of the heart, and the minor sacrifice of the eye and body in renouncing the luxury and beauty of Pagan civilisation. Men by its means were to be brought to a more spiritual

conception of God than could be found in form or colour. Like most reforms, it began by a ruthless destruction of much that was noble and right.

The disciples of the newly revealed religion were unable to follow their Divine Founder to the full extent of His supreme charity. Christ the Lord spoke with tender grief of the beauty of the Temple which should be laid low. Never in the history of the early ages of Christianity is there one word of admiration for the exquisite statues, the marvellous beauties of the ancient temples which their pious hands destroyed. To the martyr the lovely limbs of the marble god which gleamed in the sunlight over his dying agony may well have appeared robbed of their grace and glistening with diabolical horror. A question of taste does not appeal strongly to those in torment, they could and did forgive their persecutors ; it was too much to ask them to admire their art.

The worship of beauty was, not unnaturally, so detested by the early Christians that the chief use of art to them was not decoration, but picture-writing. In Pagan art the *treatment* was the chief excellence desired, in Christian art the *subject* was all important, and little was asked of the treatment beyond legibility.

Thus the earliest Christian art was neither decorative nor historical, but theological and symbolical, and was almost sacramental in its

exposition. (This is admirably illustrated in the mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, which Dr. Jean Paul Richter ascribes to the second century. The whole scheme of the decoration of the vast basilica is a deeply mystical and philosophical conception of the manifestation of the Second Person of the Trinity as the Logos.) As art it was of no more consequence than the printer's type is to the thought expressed. It was pressed into the service of God as a mere handmaid, being useful to convey by means of symbol the image of things not seen. It centred in Christ, so that all Christian art revolved round the Person of the Son of God made man, and His operation on the immortal soul of man.

The scientific methods which have been applied to determining the date of the catacombs have resulted in a greater age being attributed to certain of these underground chambers than was formerly believed. Some of them are considered by archæologists to be either of the age of the apostles, or of that immediately succeeding them. On these walls are the earliest delineations of Christ known to the world.

The earliest known fresco of Him is in the catacomb of S. Priscilla, where He is a Babe in His Mother's arms. The possibility of there being anything in the nature of a portrait of Him I shall treat in a subsequent chapter. Briefly

STATUE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

From the Christian Museum at the Lateran

speaking, the art of the catacombs is chiefly concerned in showing forth the Incarnation of the Son of God, the redemption of the soul, and its sustenance by the sacraments.

The immortality of the soul is the joyful theme of these chambers of death. The favourite subject is the Good Shepherd, and the revealing of Christ to the world in the worship of the Magi. There are few attempts to depict the life of Christ, but certain scenes illustrating the call to the soul, of which the commonest is the resurrection of Lazarus, are repeated over and over again. The use of scenes from the Old Testament typifying Christ is exceedingly common, and so also is the use of symbol. Christ is shown under the form of a Dove, a Lamb, a Fish, the fruitful Vine, the Rock from which Peter, the Christian Moses, strikes the streams of sacramental grace.

These from the point of view of art are rude, and there is no attempt in the early ones at historical accuracy; in the same set of pictures Christ is shown as a beardless youth and as a bearded man, the former being typical of eternal life, the other showing forth His suffering manhood. There is no attempt at composition, it is simply sign-writing. By the third century the isolated figures are grouped into scenes, and gradually pictures are evolved which represent historical events.

The earliest mention of a manual for painters occurs in the words of S. Gregory of Tours, who speaks of such a manual being used in Auvergne in the year 423. It grew by the addition of artists' notes, until by modern times it became a huge mass of directions, known as the Byzantine Manual. It is still used in the workshops of Mount Athos, but the oldest known copy is probably not earlier than the fifteenth century.

It was strictly historical in conception, and begins with the angels in heaven and the fall of Lucifer, and then goes on to very minute delineations of Adam and Eve's life on earth, and Old Testament subjects, the Prophets, the prophecies relating to Christ, and the Greek philosophers, all considered as the "wonders of the ancient Law," and comprises one hundred and fifty scenes.

After these come the "Wonders of the Gospel," in about a hundred and fifty scenes, representing the life, miracles, and passion of Christ. Then follow a number of mystical subjects, such as "The Divine Liturgy," which represents Christ in the act of blessing before a table, with the Father and the Holy Ghost close to Him, and the choirs of angels in ranks before Him.

Then follows a long series of minute directions how to represent the Apocalypse, the second coming of Christ, and the Last Judgment, nine pictures of the birth and life of "The Divine

Mother," ending with her Assumption into Heaven, and a curious picture of "The Fountain of Life," the Divine Mother with hands upraised, and Christ in front blessing, with the open gospel on His breast, showing the words, "I am the living water." Angels crown the Mother, and below is a fountain at which all people of the earth drink. There are twenty-four series of the "Stations of the Divine Mother," the apostles, the synods of the Church, and the miracles of the angels and saints, allegories and moralities, and minute directions as to the drawing and place of each individual subject, together with a list of suitable inscriptions for all the pictures. This brief glance will show what a compendium of biblical and theological teaching was contained in the Byzantine Manual.

In the West a different point of view was taken, wider and more profound. Christ the Everlasting was not bound by laws of time : His work for the soul belonged to the eternal, and all relating to it had its place in eternity. Thus Old Testament types and prophecies belonged to everlasting truth, and their mere historical sequence faded out of sight. We can trace the beginning of this conception in the catacombs, and in that wonderful series of mosaics in S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, attributed by Dr. Richter to a date possibly as early as the second century ; and it grew and

developed until it reached its culmination in such deeply mystical and philosophical poems as the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis.*

This carefully thought out poem of human hopes probably grew out of an earlier and simpler form known as the *Biblia Pauperum.* Its authorship is doubtful, but it is supposed to be the work of a monk of Corbie named Ansgar, who was sent on a mission by the Emperor Louis in the ninth century to the heathen Danes, and ultimately became Bishop of Hamburg. The monk, knowing that with savage people, the appeal to the eye precedes that to the ear, carried the gospel in pictures to the wild north. This Bible for the Poor, which all could read, was certainly blazoned in letters of gold and colour on church walls all over Christian Europe during the Middle Ages.

The too minute directions in the Byzantine Manual, which served to intensify the tendency of Eastern minds to the rigid observance of mere form, were not incorporated in the Western series. All the noblest artistic imagination of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries centred on depicting the life of Christ. The growth of science and philosophy invested this theme with deeper and higher interpretations, and the revived love of nature shed a new beauty on these illustrations, until we see in the works of Giotto, Duccio, Taddeo Gaddi, and other great

Italian masters, in the French illuminators, and more especially on the walls of the great French cathedrals of Chartres, Amiens, and Rheims, how every labour and incident of man's common daily life has been drawn into consecration by its union with the life of Christ. Man has never again touched that fusion of the supernatural with the natural, brought about by the preaching of the Cistercian monks in the thirteenth century, and written down for us in stone by the peasant builders of Chartres Cathedral.

The scheme of the *Biblia Pauperum* and the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis* is, roughly speaking, to represent the life of Christ not only with the natural incidents, but also with the types and prophecies of the Old Testament which referred to Him. Such a minute acquaintance with Scripture is involved that it taxes modern biblical knowledge to breaking-point to interpret these mediæval lives of Christ. I give one instance only out of the *Biblia Pauperum* to show the sort of arrangement.

"Christ bears His cross. Bajulans sibi crucem exivit.

"Gen. xxii. 6. The boy Isaac bringing the wood of the sacrifice foreshadows Christ, who carried on His shoulders the wood of the cross. Pater mi, ecce ignis et lignum.

"Isa. liii. 7. Sicut ovis ad occisionem ductus est. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.

"1 Kings xvii. 10. The woman gathering two sticks to dress food to save her and her son's life holds them in the form of the two beams of the cross by which Christ gave life to the world. En colligo duo ligna (behold, I gather two sticks).

"Jer. xi. 19. Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof.

"Jer. vi. 19. I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter."

There are forty subjects treated in this manner in the *Biblia Pauperum*, which are developed in the *Speculum* to over one hundred. They show forth the life of Christ with regard to the redemption of the world, and the application of His grace to the individual soul, each subject illustrated by the Old Testament and bearing a mystical interpretation. In fresco, oil, pen, stone, ivory, and glass, the best artists of the day spent their best labour in these minute and loving spiritual and mystical illustrations of the life of Christ, all culminating and centring in the crucifix as the supreme expression of the love of Christ.

As we shall see in tracing the history of Christ in art, it was not until the Church had passed through the horrors of persecution and numerous heresies that the heart of man found the necessity for the crucifix. The triumph of Christ, which had seemed so near to the early Christians, receded

into the far dim future; men in their suffering demanded the human sympathy which can only arise from community of suffering. Christ suffering was their healing, their glory was in the cross of Christ in whom was their salvation and life. Christ on the cross was the supreme expression of man's aspiration and hopes. The crucifix contained in itself the whole philosophy of God's love to man, the history of the Redemption, and the earnest of man's eternal life; all that God can be to man, and do for man, was contained in the single figure on the cross paying the debt of man's sin.

The earliest instances of representations of the Crucifixion combine the historical and symbolical treatments; Christ with arms widely extended, with His Mother and S. John on each side, or, as in the case of an early gem, with the twelve apostles. Frequently the sun and moon veil their faces above, and angels hold the crown of life. Generally the feet are apart, but always the arms are widely extended, signifying that Christ's salvation is for the whole human race. The arms raised above the head belong to the Reformation period, and illustrate the heresy that Christ came only to save the elect of the race of men. In all early instances the figure of Christ is divinely calm, generally with open eyes, never as in late instances, writhing as if in impatience.

The greatest painters generally represented the Crucifixion from the doctrinal, rather than the historical point of view. Fra Angelico and Tintoretto are among the best representatives of the two treatments. The accessory figures in the majority of instances have been discarded except in painting, and Christ on the cross in ivory, wood, and precious metals has become the typical expression of Christianity itself.

The mystical tendency of the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis* is probably responsible for the abstract conceptions of Christ which were popular in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and which are known as the "Eucharistic Ecce Homo."

They are, so to speak, a visualising of the mystery of the Eucharist. They represent Christ in the eternal aspect, as the ever-living, ever-suffering Sacrifice offered daily in the Mass for the sins committed daily in the world. He is as dead, yet alive, and perpetually showing His wounds (like the Lamb in the Revelation) for the healing of the nations.

Usually He is depicted as a half-length figure above a tomb, alone, the thorns on His brow, His pierced hands crossed, His eyes seeking the sinner.

There is a vast number of less mystical pictures with which this Eucharistic conception is often confounded in the present day, which represent

Christ as dead, and supported by His mother and S. John, who weep over Him, or He is upheld by angels. These are Pietàs, and should not be confounded with the more mystical theological pictures.

A third rendering of Christ suffering is as "The Man of Sorrows," representing Him alive, but overwhelmed with anguish. Albert Dürer's frontispiece to his Passion series is one of the most widely known. The presentation of this Man bowed down with pain, hiding His face in His hands, with an incongruous blaze of light round His head, is widely different in religious conception from the highly spiritualised Eucharistic "Ecce Homo" of such painters as Fra Angelico and Bellini.

Contemporary with these abstract ideas was the growth of the great enthroned Madonnas, holding the infant Christ. These represented another form of the same abstraction, the redemption of the world by the Incarnate Lord, and both grew out of the pondering by devout minds on the mystery of the Incarnation. The ultimate expression of religion in art culminated in these three conceptions—the mystical suffering Christ, the crucifix, and the everlasting Mother holding the Eternal Child. These seem to be the last lessons conveyed to the soul of man by means of form and colour.

The first blow to Christian art had appeared in the disguise of a blessing, when the overthrow of Constantinople flooded Europe with treasures of Greek art and literature. Men became so enthralled with beauty that they left off using art to express thought, and used it only to express form and colour.

The earlier artists of the Renaissance only gathered good from their contact with classical art, and employed their increased powers of technique to clothe the conceptions of their spirits. Such artists as Duccio, Giotto, and Fra Angelico used their utmost endeavours to conceive and represent Christ worthily. Art to them consisted in the stimulating of the imaginative faculties in man. Christ had not yet become merely a studio model.

With the fascination of the new learning, and the moral emancipation of the Reformation, the demand for pictures of Christ fell off. He faded out of the studios as He disappeared from the altars of the Reformed Churches, and an ever-increasing demand arose for naked pagan goddesses and the interiors of alehouses.

We see in England that for three hundred years there has been no demand by the rich for Christ in their halls, nor by the poor for Him in their churches. With the uneducated the loss of visual images of Christ has resulted not unnaturally

in considerable indifference to hearing of Christ with their ears, for to the uncultured the eye conveys more comprehensible lessons than the ear. This loss to the poor of their painted Bibles has not very much concerned the world, for since pictures have ceased to mean anything, the loss is less acute than it might have been.

What is known as modern religious art has much the same relation to actual religious art that the sacred volume of the Mormons bears to the Bible of Christianity. It is interesting as a human document, and with a few exceptions chiefly reveals a pretty sentimentality and a neat taste in archæology.

CHAPTER I

PORTRAITS OF CHRIST

The possibility of a likeness existing—Verbal descriptions of Christ's appearance—The Letter of Lentulus—The painting in the catacomb of S. Domitilla—The bronze seen by Eusebius—The ideal representations—The beardless Christs—Glass medallions—The Veronica cloth—The traditional type.

THE greatest interest attaching to the subject of Christian art is the elucidation of the personal appearance of Christ. Literature can never convey the same accurate idea of a personality as painting or sculpture. Is there in existence anything approaching a likeness of Christ?

That such likenesses existed in extremely early days we can infer from the words of S. Irenæus, who protested against the Gnostic image of Christ, said to have been copied from a statue of Him ordered by Pilate, which was placed on an equality with busts of Pythagoras and Plato. M. Raoul Rochette ascribes to these Gnostic images an extremely early date, and their origin

would account for the indignant language of certain early Christian fathers respecting images. Sculpture was so intimately connected with Greek and Roman paganism that it is extremely improbable that early statues of Christ were ever Christian in origin.

There are several views taken of the probability of an authentic likeness of Christ ever having been executed. Sir Wyke Bayliss and the late Dean Farrar represent the two extreme schools. The former asserts that the natural love of the Christian for his Lord would lead to the human desire to know what the Beloved Face was like. Dean Farrar considered that Christians were superior to any such weak desires as personal attachment to Christ, and makes very dogmatic statements respecting the catacombs, from which many archæologists differ.

Personally I see no reason to suppose that the curiosity of women was less in the first century than it is now, and I know no woman who would sacrifice father, husband, or child, to a man in whom she took no particular interest, and no one can be interested in a person without at least a desire to know what that person is like. The existence of devoted women in the first century is quite enough to ensure there being a desire to know what Christ was like. The legend of the daughters of Pudens, SS. Pudenziana and Pras-

side, asking S. Peter what the face of Christ was like, and his drawing Christ's face with a stylus on a cloth, may not be historically accurate, but it represents what was probably the desire of the women of early Christian days.

Before going into the details of such early works of art respecting Christ which have come down to us, it will be well to investigate what literature has said on this subject.

The only description in the Bible is of Him in glory at His transfiguration, and in the Apocalypse S. John says of Him—

"His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes were as a flame of fire . . . and His countenance was as the sun shining in his strength."

The dazzling effect of extreme light and glory is all that we can gather from S. John's words, who was evidently overpowered by the supreme radiance of intense light. The vision is one of superb glory and beauty, and ought to be enough in itself to dispose of the utterly unworthy and unscientific idea, which crept in with heresies of later days, that the person of Christ was mean and contemptible. Garbled quotations are often made from S. Augustine, Justin Martyr, and others, who were emphatic in declaring that Christ came with no kingly majesty of pomp, but was human in all things such as we are.

The idea that the perfect Man could have had an imperfect body is so impossible that it can be relegated to the limbo of forgotten heresies.

Possibly the earliest written description of Christ's appearance is in the celebrated Letter of Lentulus; no earlier manuscript than a twelfth-century one exists, but its statements are found in the works of S. John of Damascus, and Constantine is said to have ordered a painting to be made from this description. It was certainly not invented in the twelfth century, as Dean Farrar unwarrantably asserts.

This description speaks of Him as being tall and beautifully proportioned, with hair the colour of wine, long and curling, with forked beard of the same colour. The face was oval, and slightly ruddy, the forehead clear and without lines, the nose and mouth faultless, and the countenance noble and gracious, and impressing beholders with fear and love; the eyes very brilliant and awe-inspiring, blue in colour, and flashing. In speech He was very gentle and caressing, in teaching awe-inspiring, full of seriousness and grace. Another description of Him by Epiphanius Monachus, a Greek of the eleventh century, speaks of Him as exceedingly beautiful, very tall, with hair golden in colour, long and curly, with dark eyebrows and tawny-coloured, flashing, very beautiful eyes. His face was somewhat ruddy, full of dignity,

wisdom, and gentleness, and He greatly resembled His Mother in all respects.

All the early accounts speak of the brilliant flashing eyes, and from some accounts mentioning the colour as blue, others as tawny, it seems as if they were those whose real colour might have been that indescribable hazel hue which varies as no other eyes do with the emotion of the speaker, and are melting grey-blue in love, black in anger, and are full of mysterious lights, which seem to come from within rather than from without. Hair the colour of wine and "golden" is probably that rich, deep, red gold, which tradition speaks of as the colour of the Blessed Virgin's hair, and which has certainly existed among the Jewish race in southern climes.

The art of sculpture was too intimately associated with paganism to have been used by the Christians in Rome during the first ages of the Church, consequently we must look to other arts to find the earliest likenesses of Christ. Portrait painting was commonly used in the first century in Rome; numerous examples of it exist, but there is nothing which can be definitely called a contemporary likeness of Christ. It is on the walls of the catacombs that we meet the earliest Christian painting, and the only one approaching a portrait of Christ is now so faded and ruined as to be practically non-existent.

This is in the catacomb of S. Domitilla (not S. Callixtus, as Sir Wyke Bayliss calls it). S. Domitilla, there is good reason to suppose, was a member of the imperial house of the Flavii; a stele bearing the name has been found there, and from numerous indications, among others the classical elegance of the decorations, this chamber is, according to the best archæologists, of the first century.

It is within the bounds of possibility that the portrait of Christ on its walls might have been painted from the description of eye-witnesses, such as the apostles themselves, but the usual date ascribed to it is of the third century. It is too hopelessly defaced now to form any conclusions from, but Kügler, who saw it, describes it as having the traditional features of Christ; and Mr. Heaphy, who made a careful copy of it for Sir Wyke Bayliss, certainly shows that it carries out the early accounts of the gracious beauty of Christ's face. In connection with this subject it is particularly interesting to observe that the mosaic of Christ and Melchizedek on the nave of S. Maria Maggiore, recently examined by Dr. Jean Paul Richter, and attributed by him to the second century, has precisely this same type of face, though the expression is more severe.

Sir Wyke Bayliss speaks of the profile of Christ on the walls of the catacomb of SS. Achilles and

Nereus (i.e. S. Domitilla) as bearing the distinct mark of portraiture in its strong individuality; it occurs in one of the earliest of the catacombs, but I have been unable to find its date.

Both these heads agree with the descriptions quoted, but it is impossible to fix an exact date in either case, and the very real fear of idolatry, which was a necessity of the early Church, is probably answerable for the absence of many attempts at portraiture, while the prevalence of Gnostic images influenced the authorities of the Church in their destruction of many early pictures and statues, of which only the description has come down to us. S. Augustine describes a Gnostic woman, named Marcellina, worshipping images of Homer, Pythagoras, Christ, and S. Paul.

One early representation of Christ was seen by Eusebius, who died in 340, and who has left a description of it. It was a bronze group, said to have been erected before her house in Paneas, as a mark of her gratitude by the woman who touched our Lord's garment. The only early copy of it occurs on a fourth-century sarcophagus in the Lateran Museum. The woman is kneeling at the feet of Christ, who stretches out His hand towards her. The face is the face in the catacomb of S. Domitilla, and has the flowing hair of the traditional accounts. The original was destroyed by Julian the Apostate.

Eusebius also speaks of paintings he has seen of Christ and SS. Peter and Paul, in colours, which had been preserved to his own time, and which he thinks were made out of honour by persons whom the apostles had benefited.

There is a very early ivory medallion in the Christian Museum at the Vatican, which bears a resemblance to the face on the wall of S. Domitilla, and the face on the carved emerald, formerly in the Vatican, now unfortunately lost, had the same characteristics.

How far any of these objects were portraits of Christ is largely a matter of speculation. But from their very distinct harmony, and from the fact that the face is not of a definitely Roman, Greek, or Jewish type, but bears strong marks of personality, and, moreover, was not the artistic ideal of either of these nationalities, there is a strong presumption that it was the representation of a Man of whose lineaments a very definite description was known. It is incredible that no personal description of Christ was given to converts by His friends. "What is he like?" is the first question which is asked by anyone interested in a person, and however much the Godhead of Christ impressed His disciples, His Manhood was an equal verity to them. Certainly in the few priceless fragments we possess of early Christian art, there is this unanimity of representation.

We now come to the consideration of a totally different class of pictures of Christ, some of which date from the first and second centuries, but which can in no way be considered as portraits of Him, for they represent Him as young, beardless, and boyish, as probably the majority of His disciples never saw Him, for they show Him as barely attaining adolescence. The explanation of them is simple. They were the people's ideals.

To all pagans the period of youth is of extreme importance, for it is the time *par excellence* of enjoyment, and for those who have nothing but old age or a dim, vague hereafter to look forward to, every year which robs them of youth is attended with unavailing regret. Thus, Christ, who opened the gate of Eternal Life, was represented as eternal youth. The period when life is most enjoyable, and all the faculties are fresh, was the ideal age at which to represent Eternal Life. In the Greek works of a rather later date we see the Greek god type adopted for Christ. The beautiful motionless limbs, the straight, small features, the mild, dreamy expression, the close-cut, curling hair.

In the Roman works, both in painting and sculpture, we find greater vigour, larger features, more clumsy modelling. Both show the ideal man of the nation. They are no more to be

regarded as portraits of Christ than are the lambs and fish under which He is symbolically represented, for they are almost as much symbols, in that they show Him, not as the historical man, Christ Jesus, but as the ideal Saviour and Regenerator of man, and ultimate goal of creation.

Among the earliest instances of these beardless Christs is a Good Shepherd, in the cemetery of SS. Peter and Marcellinus, and a curious fresco in the crypt of Lucina, one of the most ancient chambers in the catacomb of S. Callixtus. It is supposed to represent the baptism of Christ. By the third and fourth centuries these beardless Christs appear indiscriminately with the bearded type in the same series of pictures or sculptures. In one of the series of the Passion of the fourth century Christ is shown as beardless when struck on the head by the soldiers, and as bearded when appearing before Pilate. In the popular and ideal figures of the Good Shepherd he is invariably beardless and youthful.

On the tomb of Junius Bassus, who died in 350, Christ is shown as a youth of about sixteen. In another instance He is shown working His miracles as a beardless youth, and in the same series as a full-grown, bearded man, enduring His Passion. Among other articles found in the catacombs, and generally supposed to be of about the third cen-

CHRIST WITH SS. PETER AND PAUL

Gilded Glass in the Vatican Library

tury, are several very remarkable gilded glasses. These are the feet of pateræ, or drinking cups, which were set in the soft mortar, and the feet, becoming embedded, have remained, while the tops have been broken. Their value consists in their being set with small glass discs which have been covered with gold-leaf and then drawn upon with a sharp point, a film of glass having then been fused over the gold, thus protecting it perfectly. De Rossi gives a high antiquity to a few, notably to one containing portraits of SS. Peter and Paul, which he believes to be contemporary with the apostles.

These glasses are supposed to be of exclusively Roman origin, and were probably drinking cups used at festivals, such as marriages, and great feast days. From the great number containing representations of SS. Peter and Paul it is conjectured that they were used largely for the patronal feast of the city of Rome, which is dedicated to the two martyrs. From a statement in the *Liber Pontificalis* that S. Zephyrinus made it a constitution of the Church that *glass* patens should be carried into the Church, and as twenty years later Pope Urban is stated to have specially provided vessels of silver, it is conjectured that some of these glass pateræ may have been used as chalices, especially among a poor and persecuted people. From the fact of glass chalices still being occasionally in use

among those most conservative people, the Copts, this theory has a certain probability about it, but it is by no means proved.

On the body of a woman in one of the catacombs, probably a martyr, was found a small glass medallion, and on it the figure of Christ with glory radiating from Him, bearing in His hands the fruit of the Tree of Life. He has the long flowing hair, and the short pointed beard, and the date may be anything from the first to the third century.

The majority of these glass medallions have the portraits of SS. Peter and Paul, very obviously done from life, with strongly marked characteristic faces, of precisely the same individuality as a bronze, believed by De Rossi to be contemporary with the apostles, now in the Vatican. The names are usually written over their heads. Other glasses have the Blessed Virgin and S. Agnes, one of the most beloved of the Roman Saints, and in many instances over these figures is a tiny form crowning them with the crown of life. This figure alone has the aureole. In one interesting specimen Christ is without the aureole, but bears a scroll inscribed "Dominus." He is standing on a mount, and with extended hands is sending forth the two great apostles SS. Peter and Paul to convert the world. On the lower part of the glass is the Lamb of God, standing on the

Hill of Sion, from which flow the four streams of the evangelists, while the faithful come from the cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Of probably the same date is a pottery bowl in the British Museum. This cannot be later than the year 327, as it bears an inscription relating to Constantine and his wife. The face has the mild pathetic eyes, the oval contour, and the sweet expression of the faded fresco in S. Domitilla. The hair falls over the shoulders and there is a cruciform nimbus round the head.

An exceedingly interesting picture, which seems to have escaped the notice of most writers on this subject, is on the altar of the chapel of the Pope's sacristan in the Vatican. It was shown to my husband by one of the Pope's chamberlains. Those archæologists who have seen it speak of it as probably belonging to the first century, and its style and painting are similar to Romano-Egyptian portraits of that date found in tombs, of which several specimens are in the British Museum. Whether the face was intended for the face of Christ or not, there is little but legend to decide. It is somewhat difficult to decipher, for the painting has darkened ; but by a strong light it is seen that the eyes are widely opened, with thin eyebrows, long straight nose, a broad forehead : there does not appear to be either beard or moustache. The expression is mild but sad ; as

a work of art it is remarkable in its individuality and lifelike qualities. It somewhat resembles Mr. Heaphy's drawing of the S. Silvester picture.

There exists a class of portraits known as the ἀχειροποίηται (εἰκόνες), or pictures "not made with hands," of which the most celebrated is the cloth known as the Veronica, kept in the Basilica of St. Peter. Dean Farrar, in his off-hand way, says that little or nothing can be seen but a blackish cloth, but his dislike of relics influences his decision. He had not seen the cloth, but I have, and whatever its origin, the impress of a face is most distinctly visible on it even at some distance. Additional interest attaches to this cloth in the discovery in recent times of such faint images on cloths from early Roman and Greek tombs, which have been laid over the faces of the dead, and which by chemical action have had printed on them an impression of the dead face.*

The legend of the Veronica cloth is that a woman compassionating the Lord's suffering as He struggled under His cross, handed Him her veil to wipe the blood from His face, and that when He handed it back to her the lineaments of His countenance were imprinted on the cloth.

* The idea that this may be the napkin which was laid over the face of Christ in the tomb, though archæologically possible, has no proof.

PORTRAIT OF CHRIST
San Silvestro in Capite, Rome

In the Cornish miracle play of the fifteenth century, *Resurrectio Domini*, the story of the healing of the Emperor Tiberius by S. Veronica by means of this cloth forms a scene in the episode of the Death of Pilate. That legend was well known in the Middle Ages.

Another of these "miraculous" portraits is supposed to be in the Armenian church at Genoa, and another in S. Sylvester's in Rome. An ancient legend says that Abgarus V., king of Edessa, desiring to know what Christ was like, sent to Him, inviting Him to come to Edessa and heal his sickness. This Christ refused to do, for He was about to undergo His Passion, but He sent a miraculous impress of His face on a cloth, and the king was healed. Another account says that the king sent an artist, and the man failing to get a likeness of the divine face, Christ took a cloth and laid it on His face, and the impress of the divine features remained upon it. This cloth, which is supposed to have saved the city of Edessa when besieged in 540, is said to have had the lines of a youthful and beautiful face upon it. The legend goes back to the third century.

The famous *Volto Santo* at Lucca is a carved wooded crucifix, and was brought to Lucca in 782.

It is in Rome that we find the earliest instances of Christ in art, and in the history of art it is

very evident how the distinct Roman traditional Christ was at times almost overwhelmed and lost in the Eastern influence which desolated the Church and Empire. The Roman Christ of the catacombs is invariably mild, sweet, and gracious. The Good Shepherd conception of Him, which existed only in Rome, was the Christ of the early Church. With the division of the Church, the gentle Christ was hidden under the fierce dogmatism of the East. The beautiful face gradually loses its sweetness; the features become first motionless and hard, then frowning and ill-tempered, until the later Christs of Byzantine art have nothing of the early Christ left but the long hair, the short beard, and the straight features. But even through the worst and darkest periods of art there does exist a faint gleam of the old Roman type which struggled to express itself in mosaics wherever the Eastern hold was lightest.

With the Renaissance, Giotto and his followers took up the threads of the old tradition, and the Christ of the twelfth century is the Christ of S. Domitilla—radiant, mild, tender, full of majesty, dignity, and love. But the Christ of the early Church was too spiritually beautiful for the world, and though the later painters of the Renaissance never reproduced the hard, angry face of the Byzantine artist, they did almost worse, for

under Rembrandt's hands He becomes a sullen, degraded boor, with swollen features, while still later artists have made Him an effeminate, sentimental nonentity, without even the dignity of manhood.

CHAPTER II

CATACOMBS

The art of the catacombs—The earliest series of the life of Christ—The Good Shepherd—The symbolical treatment of Christ—The historical treatment—The miracles—The development of the idea of the Good Shepherd—The sign of the Cross—The nimbus—Christian sarcophagi.

ON such a vexed question as the actual date of the earliest painting in the catacombs, so very few people are competent to give an opinion, that it will be less harassing to accept De Rossi's conclusions, with the modifying statement that German critics particularly delight in assigning later dates than his, than to quote various authorities in detail.

In the cemetery of S. Priscilla, said to have been the mother of the Pudens of whom S. Paul speaks in his epistle to S. Timothy, is one of the most remarkable of the wall paintings, except those in the catacomb of S. Domitilla, which show a life and grace borrowed from pagan art. Inscriptions point to the date of this chamber's decorations being of the period immediately fol-

lowing the apostles. This, the earliest painting representing the Blessed Virgin, shows her holding her Child in her arms. Her hair flows on her shoulders under a white veil. She wears a short-sleeved tunic and a cloak, and clasps her Child with a wholly maternal and lifelike action. The Child, in a natural and infantile manner, turns His head to look at the spectator. A draped figure standing beside them points to them, and a star is over the Virgin's head. In no other instance in the catacombs is there the same grace and life-like action, and critics have remarked of it that it was scarcely possible that it could have been produced between the very first ages of Christianity and the Renaissance.

With this one exception, the paintings in the catacombs are rude and elementary from the point of view of art. The earliest are incontestably the best, as, for instance, the beautiful vine which so gracefully meanders over the ceiling of S. Domitilla, with the charming *putti* disporting among its branches, which may or may not be of Christian origin ; but as Noah and Daniel appear on the same wall, it is possible that the fruitful vine, springing from one root, may have been used as a Christian emblem of Christ.

De Rossi, identifying S. Domitilla with the niece of Vespasian, gives very excellent reasons for considering this catacomb to have been connected with

the imperial family of the Flavii, and therefore to be contemporary with the apostles or their immediate successors. The fresco representing the face of Christ, alluded to in the last chapter, is in this catacomb, and also a fresco of Christ as Orpheus taming the wild beasts (the unruly passions of men) by his music. S. Ephrem and S. Clement of Alexandria use this figure as a type of Christ, but it only occurs three times in the catacombs, for it was supplanted by the much more beautiful conception of Him as the Good Shepherd.

Belonging to about the same early date is a fresco in the crypt of S. Lucina, representing the baptism of Christ, where He is seen stepping up out of the water, while a dove hovers over Him. In the same crypt is a remarkably interesting series, supposed to represent the Sacraments ; a Fish, the recognised emblem of Christ, bearing on its back a basket of bread and a glass of wine, undoubtedly refers to the mystery of the Eucharist.

The cemetery of S. Prætextatus contains the tombs of S. Quirinus, who was martyred in A.D. 130, and S. Januarius, one of the seven sons of S. Felicitas, who suffered in A.D. 162, and on the walls are paintings supposed to be of the same period.

This is the earliest *series* of the life of Christ in

art. The drawing of the figures is sufficiently good to ascribe to such an early date. The first represents Christ as conversing with the woman of Samaria at the well. He is represented as a beardless figure, clad in a tunic, and with one arm enveloped in a short cloak. The next shows Him with two of His apostles, and behind them, kneeling on the ground, is the figure of the woman who touched His garment in the throng. Christ in this is of the same youthful type, but in the third, and most remarkable, He is a bearded man, and stands in an attitude of dignity with folded hands, while a man is striking Him over the head with a long reed. Encircling His head is a very spiky crown of thorns. Another man with a reed stands by. This is the first representation, as far as I can find, of the Passion of Christ, and it is interesting to observe that this occurs in the privacy of a *private* tomb, which was hidden behind the public chambers. The only scenes from the life of Christ which were exposed in public places were of a character such as could excite no derision. To represent Him as suffering indignities and torture at the hands of men would have been to give the heathen opportunity for blasphemy. Even the sign of the cross, the instrument of shame, is in early days, when the catacombs were probably used by other than Christians, skilfully disguised by foliage. In one

instance, where two fish are adoring it, it would convey no meaning beyond decoration to pagan observers.

The most popular conception of Christ in Rome during the first three centuries was undoubtedly that of the Good Shepherd, and it rarely, if ever, occurs anywhere else. I believe I am right in quoting an eminent authority, who states that it occurs nowhere in the East at an early date, and it seems to have been a purely Roman art conception. That this aspect of the Redeemer should be the dominant one in the mind of S. Peter, to whom the charge had been given, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep," is likely enough. From whatever cause it arose, it is in the Petrine city that this benign aspect of Christ took precedence of all other. It summed up in itself the whole teaching of Christianity. It was not only symbolical of bringing the whole human race to the feet of Christ, but it represented His gracious quest after the *individual* soul, and His personal love and care of it when found. Its use in the catacombs over the graves of the dead is particularly appropriate, for, as De Rossi points out, some ancient liturgies speak of the dead being carried home on the shoulders of the Good Shepherd.

M. Raoul Rochette makes a great point of the similarity of pagan figures of Hermes Kriophoros (bearing a ram) to figures of the Good Shepherd.

There is a certain similarity between a statue of Hermes, said to have come from Thrace, and a very early and remarkably fine statue of the Good Shepherd in the Lateran Museum, but the naked pagan god is widely different from the tunic-clad shepherd. The Hermes seems chiefly to have been an Eastern conception, and the Good Shepherd is purely Western and Roman. This statue in the Lateran has the life and grace of classical art.

In the crypt of S. Lucina is possibly the first instance in the catacombs of the Good Shepherd, and as a pendant to it occurs that mysterious draped female praying figure known as the *Orante*.

In S. Domitilla is another extremely early instance of the Good Shepherd. Afterwards, the figure becomes the most popular conception of Christ during the third and early fourth centuries. There is in these gracious figures an idyllic air of joyous youth. The Shepherd caresses the lamb with tender hands, and seems to sing in the fulness of His joy. Sometimes the sheep crowd about His feet, and occasionally He bears the goat instead of the lamb, probably as an illustration of the Catholic Church's attitude in welcoming penitents back to the fold.

The presiding genius of the catacombs is this specially Petrine conception of Christ. The Good

Shepherd expresses that spirit of intense and joyful rapture which makes these underground cities of the dead seem like palaces of delight. Nowhere does an expression of doubt or sorrow meet the eye: all the emblems are of hope, joy, and love. The souls of the faithful flit as birds of gay plumage about the fruit of the vine, and drink from the fountains of grace; or as little fish, they adore the glorified cross, or float in the waters of baptism.

The symbolical treatment of Christ in the catacombs is too vast to enter upon here, and only the briefest allusion can be made. The Rock, with S. Peter striking it, from which flow the streams of the sacraments, is common. As the mystical bread of the Eucharist Christ is shown as a fish lying on a paten. He is typified as the Vine, as the Lamb, as the Fish, as Orpheus, and under numerous Old Testament figures.

In the third century the use of symbol gave way frequently to a more historical treatment, and in the choice of subjects we see very interesting revelations of the stress and agony of the time. The struggles of the faithful are shown in the ship tossed by the waves, and all but foundering in the waters of persecution, but with its sails set in the form of a cross, and Christ from heaven upholding the half-drowned mariners.

The Three Children in the Fiery Furnace is

indeed a suggestive picture of this date, but the popular picture of the time was the adoration of the infant Jesus by the Three Kings, a most touching instance of the faith which amid all the horrors of persecution saw above all else Christ revealing Himself to the world.

There are more than twenty instances of this subject in the catacombs, and none of them are before the third century. The Blessed Virgin is usually seated on a throne with the Child upon her lap. The wise men vary in numbers from two to five, for the limitation to three, founded probably on the three gifts offered by them, was not yet made. They are dressed in short tunics, and pointed Phrygian caps; they bear large flat dishes or baskets in their hands. The drawings are rude and conventional, but with a good deal of life and action naïvely expressed.

There is a particularly interesting figure of our Lord in a fresco in the Cripta delle Pecorelle in S. Callixtus, which shows Him in the act of blessing the loaves and fishes which are presented to Him by the apostles.

Some of the subjects of the life of Christ, such as the raising of Lazarus, are repeated over and over again, while others are entirely omitted. This can only be accounted for by seeing in those represented some special symbolism or significance appropriate to the time and place. The representa-

tion of a mere historical series was not desired. Art was not regarded from the point of view of decoration. Unlike pagan art, where the treatment was everything, and the subject of minor importance, in the first, second, and third centuries Christian art was frankly didactic, and the element of beauty was discarded. We see by the subjects treated the lessons they were intended to convey.

Christ baptised in Jordan, and the fisherman drawing a fish out of the water hallowed by Him, are evident representations of baptism. Noah saved "in the ark from perishing by water" typified the Church, the refuge of the soul, floating on the waters of baptism. The striking of the water from the rock, sometimes by Moses, sometimes by S. Peter, symbolised the water of salvation which flowed from the Rock which was Christ.

Very frequent are the symbols of the deliverance of the soul from death, most suitable in such a place. The favourite is the call from Christ to the soul of Lazarus, and this subject is also used in connection with the sacrament of the Eucharist, the Bread of Life, which preserved the soul from death. The deliverance of Daniel from the lions, the Three Children from the Fiery Furnace, Lot from Sodom, Moses from Pharaoh, Susanna from calumny, Jonah from the whale, have all the same interpretation, the rescue of the soul. There is a particularly interesting one of the Three Children

in the Burning Fiery Furnace, in the catacomb of S. Hermes, on which can be seen faintly traced in the background "the form of the fourth," which was "like the Son of God."

It is a curious thing that among all these types of the soul's deliverance and resurrection, not once does any picture of the Resurrection occur in the catacombs.

Among the miracles of Christ, those depicted are, the healing of the blind, of the woman with the issue of blood, of the paralytic man, the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, the changing the water into wine (both these illustrative of the Eucharist), and Christ with the Samaritan woman at the well,—all these illustrating the call of the individual soul and the nourishment by the sacraments and the revelation of Christ to the world. The connection between eternal life and the Eucharist is frequently insisted on, and S. John's words regarding the Bread of Life seem to have sunk deeply into the minds of the decorators of the catacombs. S. Ignatius' words regarding the Eucharist as "the antidote of death" are illustrated on these walls.

When the Church emerged from the catacombs to the light of day, and Rome was professedly Christian after the conversion of Constantine, Christian painting had sunk too low to be revived. It had practically been the only art that could be

practised with ease and secrecy; with political liberty of conscience came liberty to practise the art of sculpture and mosaic.

With the passing of the days of persecution, certain conceptions of Christ which had been most popular gave place to others; after the fourth century representations of the Good Shepherd gave place to those of Christ in glory, seated among His apostles and blessing the world. The idea was extended from blessing the individual to blessing the whole world. This transition from the more personal idea to the universal is shown in one of the latest drawings of the Good Shepherd, which has come down to us on the walls of a chapel in the cemetery of S. Soteris, which joins on to the cemetery of S. Callixtus, and it may be taken as the ultimate expression and development of this idea. The Good Shepherd, bearing the sheep on His shoulders, stands in a garden with trees and flowers, and sheep are at His feet. At the corners are other sheep who are not yet of His flock, and to gather them in He despatches two of His disciples, who, bearing the waters of baptism in their hands, hasten to do His bidding. The attitude of the world is revealed by some of the sheep turning their backs, and others looking eagerly up to obey the divine call.

By the end of the fourth century another idea

is introduced. Christ is seated and caressing a sheep on His right hand, while with the left He dismisses the goats from His side. By this date it was found necessary to add the word "pastor" to indicate the personality of the shepherd, and in the instance where this occurs, in the cemetery of Generosa, He has no longer the lamb on His shoulders, but stands amid His sheep with the pipes in His hand.

One of the first expressions of liberty was the uplifting of the cross as a symbol of victory. The cross and the monogram of Christ were blazoned forth on roofs and walls. The use of the sign of the cross was inculcated for almost every act of life. Tertullian speaks of its use on going out and coming in, on dressing, at food, at the bath, in short, at any change of action. With the triumph of Christianity, such acts could be made in public, and we find the cross conspicuous in every place.

By this time also the use of the nimbus became general. Some of the earliest instances occur in the cemetery of S. Callixtus, and in the gilded glasses of the third century. Its origin is uncertain. It existed among pagans before Christianity, and certain authors are inclined to think it was adopted by Christians to signify dignity and glory. Others have seen in it the extension of the idea of a crown. It seems to me that it is possible that

its use among Christians was suggested by the description of our Lord at the Transfiguration, when light is described as emanating from His person.

From the days of Moses men have had a half-formed idea that the beauty of God's grace may radiate from and illuminate the clay of man, and this idea, it is quite possible, animated Buddhist as well as Christian artists.

The nimbus encircles the head only; the aureole is light proceeding from the entire body, and is usually used only for the Persons of the Trinity, or in symbolical pictures of the Blessed Virgin, whose body contained the "Light of the World." An early use of the nimbus surrounding the head of Christ is in the nave of S. Maria Maggiore; and in the catacomb of SS. Peter and Marcellinus there is a large triple glory surrounding the head of Christ, who is seated on a throne on high blessing the world. Below, in another compartment, is the Lamb standing on a mount, with SS. Peter and Marcellinus and two disciples worshipping. The Lamb wears the nimbus, and in this case the Lamb takes the place of the Good Shepherd of earlier days. Frequently the Lamb is pierced, and the rivers of grace (perhaps also symbolising the Four Evangelists) flow as the four rivers of Paradise from His side. The faithful, represented as sheep, stand on each side of the mount.

Before leaving the catacombs to trace the progress of art in the fourth and fifth centuries, a few words should be said on the immensely interesting subject of Christian sarcophagi. Before the fourth century there was scarcely such a thing as Christian sculpture, but a good instance occurs on the tomb of Livia Primitiva, which was found near the tomb of S. Peter, and has the Good Shepherd, the Fish, and the Anchor engraved on its surface; it is supposed to have been executed in the third century.

Christianity embraced such a number of poor persons that mere shelves cut in the tufa of the catacomb galleries and closed by slabs were generally all that could be used. For wealthy persons the difficulty of having Christian subjects carved was too great to be easily overcome, and we even find instances of a carved pagan tombstone being used with the pagan carving carefully turned *inside* and the rough side only exposed.

In the case of S. Domitilla, whose tomb was situated on the family estate, the catacomb appears to have been designed for the use of stone sarcophagi only. In this cemetery was found the body of S. Petronilla, who is regarded as the spiritual daughter of S. Peter, whose hand is said to have traced the inscription "AURELIÆ PETRONILLÆ FILIÆ DULCISSIMÆ."

The earliest *dated* Christian sarcophagus with

a carving on it represents the Nativity. The consular date answers to A.D. 343. But these expensive and cumbersome graves could not be in use during the ages of persecution, and it is not until towards the end of the fourth century that they became general.

The finest example of a Christian sarcophagus of the fourth century was found in the crypt of S. Peter, and is now in the Lateran Museum. From the excellence of its art, it might even belong to an earlier date; the figures are finely sculptured in high relief with classical elegance. It is divided into compartments by richly chased pillars. Christ is seated in glory in the centre. His feet rest on the vault of heaven typified by a woman holding a veil over her head. His face is youthful and beardless, with rippling hair. One hand is raised in benediction, and with the other He gives the scroll of the gospel to S. Peter, who receives it with veiled hands. S. Paul and apostles are in other compartments. At one end is Abraham sacrificing Isaac, and at the other, Christ, the new Isaac, is before Pilate, who is washing his hands.

The two ends of this sarcophagus bear the denial of S. Peter, and that extremely interesting group already alluded to of the monument at Cæsarea Philippi spoken of by Eusebius.

Another most interesting sarcophagus was

found under the altar of the Tribune in S. Paul's, outside Rome. From the unfinished state of the portrait busts it has been inferred that its completion was prevented by some calamity, possibly the Gothic invasion in A.D. 410.

Its chief interest consists in its having the only known representation of the Trinity of so early a date. God the Father is seated on a veiled throne. In front of Him is Christ, "by whom all things were made," creating Eve. Behind the Father stands the Holy Ghost, who breathed into man the breath of life. It is unusual in such early art to represent the Holy Ghost otherwise than under the form of a Dove.

The fall of man is next represented, and Christ stands between the guilty pair and gives His divine promise to the woman, while He apportions to each their labours in the world, to Adam a sheaf, to Eve a lamb.

Below this group is the fulfilling of the promise. The Eternal Word is a babe in His Mother's arms, the Holy Ghost, the co-operator, exactly the same figure as that in the upper compartment, stands by Mary. In front are the Magi. Then comes a series of the benefits of the Redemption shown by the miracles of Christ, ending with the symbols of the Holy Eucharist, the food of the soul. Underneath is the story of the denial and apprehension of S. Peter, and types from the Old Testament,

and on either side two small statues of the Good Shepherd.

Of about the same date is another sarcophagus, representing the Passion of Christ,—the earliest series of an historical nature of the latter events of Christ's life. He is shown before Pilate, being crowned with thorns, carrying His cross, and symbolically in the grave. Two soldiers sleep underneath a cross on which are perched birds, and above which is the *Labarum*,* which has the crown of immortality surrounding it. The mixture of historical scenes with this mystical exposition of the death and resurrection of Christ is exceedingly interesting.

* The so-called "Cross of Constantine," a monogram of the Greek letters X and P, for Χριστός.

CHAPTER III

MOSAICS

The art of mosaic—The form of the Christian Church—Christ in glory, the predominant idea in the art of Constantine—The mosaics in Rome—The mosaics in Ravenna—The degradation of Christian art under Byzantine influence.

SCULPTURE was so inextricably associated with the worship of the pagan gods that it was impossible even to adapt it to any great extent in the new churches, but so strongly was the necessity for art of some sort felt, that the old stones were made to speak in a new fashion.

The art of mosaic, the piecing together of minute tesseræ of coloured stone or glass, had been practised since the Augustan period in Rome, usually in geometrical and floral designs on pavements. This art the Christians of the fourth century seized upon with passionate ardour. The costliness of the materials was not a hindrance, but rather an attraction to the Church, which for the first time possessed riches, and an acknowledged position.

A change takes place in the subjects repre-

sented; the symbolical treatment of the catacombs is widely extended, and the figure of Christ is greatly exalted and magnified. Rarely before the fourth century do we find representations of Christ in glory. When the Church emerged from the bloodstained vaults of the catacombs, its victory was celebrated by the enthroning of its Master above the world. The Christ of the Apocalypse was the supreme expression of the Christianity of the fourth and fifth centuries, the great age of Catholic Christology.

That the whole world would be brought to His feet was the natural belief of the day, and from henceforth Christ seated in glory with His faithful around Him reigned on the walls of the great basilican churches, and expressed the dominant idea of the Christian world; until men discovered that their conception of His triumph was all their own, and the bitterness of the crucifix had to take its place in the history of religion before the final triumph could be reached.

The chief apsidal mosaic which has been left of the time of Constantine has been greatly restored, but obviously on its early lines, and is in the church of S. Pudenziana, in Rome. This church is built over a Roman house, which is said to have been the house of that Pudens who harboured S. Peter, possibly the Pudens referred to by S. Paul, and perhaps also by Martial, in his

wedding hymn on the occasion of the marriage of the British princess Claudia.

One of the interesting features of this mosaic is that it represents the city of Jerusalem in the background, an idea confirmed, as Mr. Lowrie points out, by an early mosaic map found at Madaba, in Palestine. Christ is seated on a throne in the centre of the apse. He is clothed in gold with a gold nimbus. The attitude is easy and dignified. He raises one hand in blessing, the other holds a book inscribed, "*Dominus conservator Ecclesiæ Pudentianæ.*" The apostles are seated on each side of Him, in the position occupied by the priests with regard to the bishop's chair in the churches. Behind them, presenting wreaths to Christ, are the two daughters of Pudens. Above the city, on the domed vault, is a large jewelled cross, probably of later date, and the symbols of the Evangelists. The composition, in its absence of stiffness and the classical arrangement of the drapery, points to an early origin, though it has been so much restored that its value is greatly lessened.

It is probable that the Christian churches were formed on the plan of the old Roman basilicas, but it is a much disputed point, and cannot be entered upon here. The term *basilica* was first applied to Christian churches in the early fourth century, and simply means "the royal hall."

The form was rectangular, and consisted of a high nave divided by two rows of columns from two low aisles; the upper walls above the columns were pierced by clerestory windows. At one end of the building was a semicircular apse, the *tribune*, with a raised floor. This *tribune*, or *presbyterium*, was reserved for the clergy, who sat on seats round it, the middle seat being the bishop's throne, usually a raised stone chair, with sometimes a canopy supported by columns over it. In the diameter of the semicircle was the altar, which was railed off from the rest of the church by low marble screens, *cancelli*, whence the word "chancel."

In large churches, where there was a transept, this space was separated from the nave by an immense arch, called the arch of the tribune, and on this arch, the most conspicuous place in the whole church, was usually an immense mosaic representing the Triumph of Christ, or Christ as Judge. The domed wall-space behind the bishop's chair was the favourite place to represent Christ seated, or standing among His apostles, while the faithful as sheep stood in a row beneath.

The usual scheme of decoration was to use the space above the pillars of the nave for scenes representing the life of Christ on earth, sometimes with Old Testament types, as in S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, or the life of the Church on

earth, shown by the rows of martyrs in S. Apollinare in Ravenna. These lead up to the revelation of Christ on earth, as in Ravenna, where He sits as a Babe on His Mother's knee; or more commonly to Christ in His triumph, when all things shall be placed under His feet, as in the church of the Holy Wisdom at Constantinople, where, it is said, the divine figure still shows dimly through the Moslem whitewash. With very few variations this is the predominant and highly didactic scheme of the decoration of the churches of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries.

The clergy were the enthusiastic patrons of the new art. Pope Leo the Great, in 440, is said to have designed the magnificent mosaics for the Arch of Triumph in S. Paul's, outside Rome. It is interesting to see what the Pope and people of Rome thought of Christ in the middle of the fifth century.

The Arch of Triumph fortunately escaped the fire in 1823, which destroyed the mosaics of the walls of the nave, though the splendid groves of antique columns fortunately remain. Over the summit of the arch, enclosed by a cruciform nimbus, and surrounded with rays, is a colossal half-length figure of Christ. The right hand is raised in benediction and the left holds the rod of power. The eyes are widely open, and the eyebrows arched, the mouth is mild, and the whole

expression is serene, but awe-inspiring. Two little figures of angels at the sides adore Him, and, except for the mosaic in S. Maria Maggiore, these are some of the earliest instances of winged angelic figures. Above in the clouds are the symbols of the four evangelists, and on each side of the arch are the four-and-twenty elders, casting their crowns before the Redeemer. Below them are two exceedingly animated figures of SS. Peter and Paul pointing up to Christ.

The mosaics of the nave and arch of S. Maria Maggiore have been hitherto somewhat loosely attributed to the fifth century. In a recently published book, *The Golden Age of Classic Christian Art*, by Jean Paul Richter and A. Cameron Taylor, very excellent arguments are brought by them to prove the pre-Constantinian date of the mosaics. The excellence of the art, and the profoundly philosophical conception of the series, which is a deeply reasoned out presentment of the Logos, appear much more characteristic of the art and thought of the second century than the fifth. The final decision on this matter I leave to much more competent critics than myself, but I only note one of the mosaics in the nave, which represents the sacrifice of Melchizedek, as in that only does the actual figure of Christ appear, except as a child.

Melchizedek, an animated and noble figure, is

offering a basket of bread which is uplifted over an amphora of wine, and these two objects, the bread and wine, form the most important and central part of the lower picture. Above in opalescent air, streaked with purple and scarlet clouds, bends the half-revealed figure of Christ, extending His hand as if to identify Himself with the Eucharistic offering. This treatment of Melchizedek as a prototype of the Eucharist is preserved in the canon of the Roman Mass to the present day.

The dramatic intensity of the picture is most impressive, and there is a flow of life and action about the figures which belongs to the age of classical art. The thought symbolised is also of the time of Justin Martyr, who may be said to be the great exponent of the doctrine of the *actual* presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

A very remarkable point is that the face of Christ, while of the bearded, long-haired type, is the face of a deeply philosophical man, and one who has known pain and anguish. It is encircled by a halo, the first representation in Christian art of the divine radiance, if Dr. Jean Paul Richter's dates are right. He is clothed in a deep blue or purple pallium, the conventional dress of a philosopher. Supposing this date to be the true one, this mosaic approaches closely in interest to the portrait in the catacomb of S. Domitilla.

There is not space to go into the remarkable series of mosaics on the arch representing the advent of Christ. The mosaics of the nave represent the prototypes of the Logos, while those of the arch show His revelation to the world, beginning with the Annunciation. The most representative, as showing the thought of the time, is the one called the Presentation in the Temple, which not only shows Mary holding her Child enthroned on her hands, attended (as is usual in this series) by two angels, and Simeon rushing forward to receive Him with veiled hands, but also has a procession of Hebrew priests, who with gestures repudiate Him. In a lower compartment is a retinue of prince and courtiers, led by a philosopher, who directs them to the youthful Christ, who is accompanied by His Mother, S. Joseph, and four angels. This representation of philosophy, i.e. the true wisdom, leading to the Incarnate Logos, may be said to be the culmination of the scheme of the decoration of the Basilica.

Among the most beautiful examples of Roman mosaic now remaining is that most noble conception on the apsed dome of the little church of SS. Cosmas and Damian (A. D. 526–530), the "unmercenary ones" (*ἀνάργυροι*), as the Greek Liturgy designates them, the physician saints who gave their services and their lives to the poor.

Few visitors to Rome take the trouble to go and see this, one of the noblest conceptions of Christ the world of art has produced. Very poor people can always be found praying there, but I have never seen a visitor.

The background is of that intense and deep dark blue, which is only found in the mosaics of the earliest and best period. It is the blue of the deepest sea, rather than of the air, and in this instance it is rendered doubly luminous by the flaming clouds of glory which sweep across it with the hues of the most brilliant sunset. Amid the glow of the heavenly flames, the majestic figure of Christ stands. He no longer holds the scroll of the law; that is passed, and lies on the ground below, at His feet. He is there as Christ the Creator and Judge and Lord of all, not merely the teacher and the man. He blesses and forgives, all else is forgotten. Few compositions of any age approach the majesty and the divine benignity of this majestic Christ, severe with the inexorableness of justice, and compassionate as only infinite wisdom can be.

On either side, S. Peter and S. Paul lead forward S. Cosmas and S. Damian, S. Theodore, and Felix IV., the founder of this Church. Below them runs the symbolical river of Jordan, full of water plants, signifying the fruitfulness of baptismal grace. In the middle, on a mount, is the

Lamb of God, with the sheep of His flock beside Him. On either side, above, are angels on the arch of the apse. There is a certain stiffness of treatment, and signs of decadence about the minor figures and details, and the supreme excellence of the work is in the majestic figure of Christ.

Of the time of Pope Pelagius II. (A.D. 579–590) is the church of S. Lawrence, outside the walls of Rome. On the apsidal arch is a figure of Christ seated upon the globe of the world, bearing a cross in His left hand, and with saints on either side. The face of Christ is of the usual bearded type, and is of a peculiarly sweet and benign expression. There is one instance of a beardless Christ among the great Roman mosaics, and that is in S. Constanza, of which the original work was fourth century; but it has been so much restored that it is difficult to determine how much the central figure of Christ adheres to the first design.

During the fifth and sixth centuries, when the struggle with Arianism absorbed the vital energies of the Church to such an extent that Catholicism was almost conquered, the importance of Ravenna eclipsed that of Rome. S. Apollinaris, a disciple of S. Peter, was its first bishop in A.D. 44. In A.D. 493 Theodoric, the Ostro-Goth, conquered it, and set up his throne there, and it

became the rival of Rome, and the great Arian stronghold.

Roman art sank under the conflicts which the Church was suffering, and it is to Ravenna that we must turn for the brief flaming of the flickering embers.

It is possible in Ravenna really to see with our eyes what a fifth-century church was like, for the little church of S. Nazarius and Celsus, built about 440 as a mausoleum for the father, husband, and brother of the Empress Galla Placidia, actually remains in its entirety.

It is a little cruciform structure, with a domed roof; above the lower marble lining of the walls it is entirely covered with mosaics. The groundwork is of the richest blue, with wreaths of flowers, fruit, and vines, interspersed with stars and doves, and other decorative subjects, covering the walls and roof. The effect of colour is stupendous, nothing but the deep glow of the mosaics and the delicate tints of the marble meet the eye. Over the doorway Christ is represented as a young shepherd with long flowing hair, but clothed in the imperial purple, and seated among His flock—one of the latest instances in which this representation of the Good Shepherd occurs. On another wall, over the altar, Christ, bearded and of full age, bearing the flag of victory, is shown burning the heretical books of the Arians. As an example of

the superb decorative effect of mosaic work, the appearance of this little chapel is magnificent, but the figures of Christ are feeble and poor.

Among the best and most ancient mosaics in Ravenna are those of the Baptistry. This octagonal building is supposed to have been a Roman bath and converted to Christian use in 449. The cupola is covered with mosaics. On the deep blue ground is shown the baptism of Christ, who is represented as standing in the semi-transparent water up to His waist. He has long flowing hair, and the face is of the usual catacomb type. There is no nimbus, but the Holy Dove descends on Him from on high. S. John, holding a jewelled cross, pours water on Him from a patera. The River Jordan is still represented in the old symbolical manner by a river-god, but here he is drawn into the service of God by being made to hold a cloth.

Round the base of the dome is a band of the apostles standing on a green ground to represent the earth ; they are divided by stiff and ungraceful palm trees. They are dignified and impressive figures, though there is too much uniformity in the heads, but they are full of life as they majestically bear their crowns of glory in their hands. Below these colossal figures is a richly decorated band of altars, garlands, and drapery.

There is a special interest attaching to the por-

CHRIST ENTHRONED

Sixth Century Mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna

trait of Justinian, in the church of S. Vitale in Ravenna (541–6), as it was greatly owing to his influence that the precise formalism of the East fastened as a deadly octopus on the free spirit of the West. Art in Rome still retained some of its old classical grace and freedom, and its resuscitation in mosaic held promise of greater and nobler development. But the devastating nature of the fierce struggle with Arianism left the heads of the Church little opportunity for the development of art, and added to that was the crushing influence of Byzantinism. Art in Rome was almost extinguished during the reign of the Eastern emperors, and in Ravenna we can trace the beginnings of the deadly Eastern influence under Justinian.

The ideas remain the same for the time. In the church of S. Apollinare Nuovo, Christ, as ruler of the world, sits on the globe, with angels on either hand, while a long procession of martyrs offer Him their crowns, noble and dignified figures, but already become fixed and immovable. But not yet has the divine sweetness of the face of Christ degenerated into the harsh, forbidding scowl of later days. In S. Vitale He is represented as young and seated on the world. He holds out a crown to His followers, an angel stands at each hand. The golden ground of later art is here beginning to supersede the blue vault representing the heaven of the earlier work, but

in S. Vitale it is streaked with bars of purple cloud.

The long side walls of the nave over the somewhat low pillars bear two long processions of extreme historical interest. On one side the Emperor Justinian, wearing his imperial robes, and bearing costly gifts, is advancing, surrounded by courtiers, soldiers, and clergy. On the other side a similar procession of women, led by the Empress Theodora, in her richly embroidered robes, is in the act of entering a church. The faces are unmistakably portraits, but there are evidences of the degeneration of art. The feet of Justinian and his attendants are all arranged so symmetrically that they actually overlap each other. The hands bear but the most artificial connection with the figures, and the dignity and beauty of the composition depend more on the gorgeousness of the clothes than the attitudes of the figures.

Executed with greater care, and bearing more signs of life, are the two rows of saints and martyrs on the walls of S. Apollinare Nuovo, formerly the basilica of Theodoric, and probably executed between the years 553 and 556.

Kugler points out some resemblance in treatment to the frieze of the Parthenon. A long procession of martyrs and confessors, clad in light-coloured garments, bearing their crowns in their hands,

advances with a certain stately movement towards the enthroned Christ, a noble figure seated between four grand, if stiff, archangels. On the other side a similar procession of women moves towards the Mother of God seated with her Son upon her lap.

The monotonous effect of the long rows of single figures is somewhat relieved by the introduction of palm trees between them ; but in spite of this stiff arrangement, there is a stately rhythmic action, which makes the interior of this church one of the most impressive in the world.

The last of the great mosaics at Ravenna which we can notice are those of S. Apollinare in Classe, which were probably executed about the years 671 and 677. Here we see the degradation of the older ideals. The gold of man's desires has definitely replaced the blue background of heaven. On a circle studded with gold stars and jewels is a highly decorated cross with a half-length figure of Christ in the centre, a disrespect not common in very early art. On each side are the half-length figures of Moses and Elias emerging from clouds. Above appears the hand of God. Below, on the earth, stands S. Apollinare and fifteen sheep. This is, I believe, the earliest attempt to portray the Transfiguration of Christ, and as such is particularly interesting. The drawing is very inferior to that

of the earlier mosaics, the figures are stiff and lifeless, while the observation of nature has declined also, for the sheep and trees are ugly, unreal, and conventional.

Later on we find not even the half-length figure of Christ, but He is replaced by a jewelled cross, as in S. Stefano Rotondo, in Rome, and in S. Agnes, outside the walls of Rome, where, instead of Christ blessing, is a jewelled cross with only a medallion of Christ above.

The Christ that is found in the catacombs and that reigned on the walls of the fourth, and fifth, and sixth century churches, has not in majesty and tender dignity been excelled in decorative art. Never has Christianity expressed itself in form and colour more nobly than in the mosaics on the walls of the great basilicas. Not even the great artists of the Renaissance wrought greater wonders of colour as allied to architecture than these mosaic workers of the triumphant Church in the first days of its freedom.

From the seventh century it is interesting to observe the gradual decadence of art in the grave-clothes of Byzantine despotism. The limbs become first rigid and immovable; then they disappear altogether under the meaningless folds of stiff drapery. The hands and feet project at impossible intervals from the over-decorated garments, and bear scarcely any relation to

anatomical possibilities. If the slightest action were attempted the figures would utterly collapse. They are not even depicted as standing on the ground, but adhere to a gold background as if pinned up.

The decline in the faces is quite as marked. The mild benignity of the Christ of the catacombs, and His dignified grandeur as shown by the Roman artists, have given way to a dull, lifeless scowl. The features have become long and pinched, the eyes lifeless and staring, and the mouth small and peevish; the flesh tints greenish, with daubs of red. The dress became the most important part of the picture, and was encrusted with gold and jewels, and ceased to represent any limbs beneath, until at last a piece of actual gold brocade, or a piece of jewelled metal, was nailed on to a board beneath a daub representing a face in the last stage of human portraiture.

This art of the ninth century still survives in Russia and Greece, where the sacred icons and pictures of to-day are scarcely distinguishable from the debased Byzantine works of a thousand years ago.

The mosaics in S. Prasside in Rome are a good instance of the debasement of the ideals of former days. Christ is represented as standing in glory, with the faithful offering Him their crowns; but

He has become a conventional type, lean, long, and lifeless, with a scowling forehead. The worshippers are scarcely more than rows of straight lines with heads stuck on above. All life and expression and individual interest have fled.

CHAPTER IV

SCULPTURE, WALL-PAINTINGS, AND ILLUMINATIONS

The earliest representations of the Crucifixion—The fading of the early Roman benign type of Christ under Byzantine influence—Illuminations—MS. of S. Gregory Nazianzen—Eleventh-century wall-paintings—The revival of art in France—The sculptures of Chartres and Rheims.

THE derision with which Christianity was regarded in Rome in the first and second centuries is illustrated by the earliest known representation of the crucifix, which occurs as a blasphemous scrawl on the walls of a room in the lower portion of the Palatine Palace, and is supposed to have been executed by a soldier, or a schoolboy, in these "servants' quarters" of the imperial palace. It was evidently written in derision of a Christian comrade, and bears the inscription, "Alexamenus worships (his) God."

A figure bearing an ass's head is stretched upon a cross of the usual Latin shape, and to emphasise the insult the back view is shown of the figure; beside it is a youth in the attitude of prayer: the "Alexamenus" of the inscription. Tertullian alludes to a similar calumny when he

says: "Christians do not adore the head of an ass, as they cast in their teeth, but the true God and the sign of the cross."

One of the earliest representations of the Crucifixion is on an ivory box in the British Museum, and dates from the late fourth or early fifth century, but there is a small engraved carnelian, found at Constanza, in Roumania, with gems dating from the first to the third century, which may be very much earlier, but no positive date can be affixed to it. It represents Christ with widely outstretched arms, and wearing only the loin cloth. The cross is very short, with the arms only just over the heads of the apostles, who stand in a row on each side.

The ivory box in the British Museum has two remarkably interesting plaques, for, besides the Crucifixion, there is one of the very earliest representations of Christ bearing the cross. The treatment of the Crucifixion is purely devotional. The Blessed Virgin and S. John stand beneath the cross, and on the other side is the soldier who pierced Him, gazing at Him in awe. The figure is rudely carved, is clad only in the loin cloth, and the feet are apart. Over the head is the inscription, "REX IUD." He wears the nimbus.

The Crucifixion on the door of S. Sabina on the Aventine is carved in cypress wood, and dates from the beginning of the fifth century. Many

CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS, AND THE CRUCIFIXION

From a Fifth Century Ivory in the British Museum

of the panels have been lost, including those of part of the life of Christ, but fortunately the panels representing the rest of the Passion remain. The treatment of the Crucifixion is so remarkable that it practically stands alone in art. Christ is shown, not with the arms spread, but more in the attitude of prayer ; and the two thieves—much smaller figures—have the same position. There is no cross shown, but the lines of the architecture form two uprights and one long cross-beam. The treatment is so frankly ideal and devotional, so far removed from realism, and is so symbolical, as to be little more than an emblem.

It is on one of the other panels of the doors of S. Sabina that we get the most expressive instance of the spirit of the Church of the fifth century, when she was torn by heresies and all but conquered by the mixed polytheism and unitarianism of the Arians. The figure of Christ, whom the Arians denied to be consubstantial with the Father, is shown in triumph eternal in the heavens, the sun, moon, stars, and the vault of the universe beneath His feet. On the earth stand the two great apostles, SS. Peter and Paul, holding a wreath, symbolical of the crown of glory, and in the wreath is framed a cross. Between the apostles stands a veiled woman, much the same figure as the "Orans" of the catacombs, symbolical of the Church, gazing *through* the cross, by which only

she can receive the crown of glory, to Christ in the heavens. From this time onwards the use of the crucifix steadily grows, until Christ crucified takes the place of Christ triumphant—a striking instance of the storm and stress of the Church torn by heresies and rent by barbaric invasions, which found more comfort in the sorrows of humanity shared by Christ than in the far-off vision of His ultimate triumph.

From the seventh to the twelfth century the best Christian art is found in the pages of illuminated MSS., on ivory, and in silver and stone work. In the British Museum is a silver censer of Byzantine work of the sixth century, found in Cyprus. It bears a fine head of Christ, who still has the mild expression of early art, but during this period so little new development occurred that it can be briefly alluded to in a few words.

The old beautiful type of Christ gradually faded under the blighting influence of the East. An instance of this occurs in the Syriac Bible of 586, illustrated by the monk Rabbula, and now preserved in Florence. In representing the Crucifixion he makes the face of Christ wear a painful and scowling expression. He also differs from the earlier Crucifixions by clothing Him in a long striped robe ; the feet are nailed at the *ankles*, not through the feet, which may be compared with the nail marks in the *wrists* of the figure on the " Holy

THE ASCENSION

From a Sixth Century Syriac Bible in the Bibliothèque Nationale

Shroud" at Turin. The nimbus surrounds His head, and the sun and moon are veiled behind Him. The thieves are on either side, and there are two groups, one of our Lady and S. John, and one of the sorrowing women. A soldier is piercing Christ's side, and another offering Him the sponge of vinegar, while beneath the cross are soldiers disputing over His garments. The mixture of symbolism and realism in the picture is very curious.

In the same Bible is one of the earliest known pictures of the Ascension. Christ is represented as rising in an aureole of light which is carried by angels, while other angels adore Him. Below Him is a chariot of fire with the symbols of the evangelists, supported by cherubic wings, full of eyes. A hand issues from this, pointing to the Blessed Virgin, who, surrounded by the apostles, stands on the earth with hands uplifted in prayer. Angels point out the ascending Christ. The drawing is rude, but full of vigour, and has not yet stiffened into conventional types.

Up to the seventh century Christian art was much the same all over Christendom, but after the division of the Church art also gradually fell into the division of East and West.

In Ireland, that home of early Christian culture, farthest removed from the Constantinopolitan influence, there was a fine school of illuminators

in the seventh and eighth centuries, which greatly influenced the art of northern Europe. Curious instances of the early Roman school, untainted by Byzantinism, are to be observed in rude pen-and-ink drawings of the ninth century, executed under the influence of those pioneers of light and learning, the Irish monks of S. Gallen. Among them is a wonderful drawing of Christ as "Salvator Mundi," and another of a youthful Christ.

While the Irish monks of S. Gallen did their vigorous illuminations, the monks of the neighbouring island of Reichenau were renowned for their mural decorations. The best way to teach barbarians is through their eyes, and the saintly and cultured Irish covered the walls of the churches with scenes from the life of Christ as a lesson-book for the ignorant. We can still see in S. George, in Oberzell, the miracles of Christ, which were gazed upon by the rude Germanic tribes of the tenth century.

The celebrated manuscript of S. Gregory Nazianzen of the ninth century, in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, contains one of the earliest known, if not the earliest, picture of the temptation of Christ, and it is chiefly interesting as representing the devil as a black, not uncomely youth, with angelic wings, and clad in a light green cincture, with neither horns nor hoofs, nor any of the later developments of devildom. He

is shown as standing in the air beside Christ, who is on the roof of the Temple, and with rather an insinuating, pleasant manner, as if suggesting a complimentary exhibition of power, is inviting our Lord to cast Himself down. The figure of Christ is of the conventional bearded type.

There is a beautiful illustration of the finding of Christ in the Temple in the same book. In an apsidal space at the head of a table stands the youthful Christ. On each side are the doctors, and the book of the law lies before them. At the side Jesus joins His mother, who tenderly kisses Him, while S. Joseph looks gravely on.

With the tenth and eleventh centuries came a revival of art and religion. A German tenth-century ivory in the John Rylands Library at Manchester is rude to barbarism, but is astounding in the new and vigorous life which is displayed in its intense emotion.

There is an eleventh-century ivory in Paris which more forcibly illustrates the new departure. Christ seeming really alive, with a fine expressive head, a short, curled beard and classically flowing drapery, stands on an eminence ; beside Him is the Emperor Romanus IV. and the Empress Eudoxia, and both these are typical Byzantine figures, with tightly swathed jewelled garments and lifeless limbs ; only the Christ is alive.

The wall-paintings in the church of S. Urbano,

in Rome, of the eleventh century, represent the Passion of Christ and His glorification, and betray in the greater animation of the figures, which still retain their Byzantine leanness and futile drapery, the early germs of this resurrection. This development is still further carried on in the mosaics of S. Maria in Trastevere, in Rome, which were done in the Pontificates of Innocent II. and Eugenius III., A.D. 1139–1153. In this Mary's robes flow simply in natural lines. Christ, seated by His mother, lays His arm confidingly on her shoulder. Saints are on each side of them, and below on a blue ground are thirteen lambs. Above the Tribune are the symbols of the evangelists, and Isaiah and Jeremiah, and birds, fruits, and vessels. The proportions have lost their excessive length, and no longer do the figures give the appearance of having been passed through a mangle.

The beautiful mosaics in S. Clemente, in Rome, go still further, and are of a thoroughly Western character. Christ is no longer grim, nor Mary peevish.

In an eleventh-century manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale is an extremely curious picture, the like of which I have never seen elsewhere. On a short couch, not unlike a sofa, Christ is reclining; a mantle is thrown back from Him to reveal His figure, and behind Him stand in close

WINGED CHRIST

Russian Icon "Blagoe Molchanie"

THE NATIVITY

Mosaic at Palermo

array six rows of armoured angels, with drawn swords and spears, guarding His repose. The execution is formal and rude, but how beautiful is the idea of these solemn hosts of the Lord surrounding with ceaseless vigilance the slumbers of Him who was made lower than themselves!

A very curious mosaic of the end of the eleventh century occurs in the Norman cathedral of Salerno, founded by Robert Guiscard, which has on the altar apse a *winged* figure of Christ wearing a crimson robe, and bearing a sceptre and globe. The vigour of the North here had evidently overborne the enfeebled Byzantine tradition. The winged Christ is found in one of the best-known Russian icons, that known as the *Blagoe Molchanie* (Good Silence), in the Spasoyakovlevsky Demetrievsky Monastery, at Rostov, in Yaroslav.

The island of Torcello contains some of the most interesting twelfth-century work, and shows plainly the revolt from Byzantinism, in the freedom of the figures of Christ, in the mosaics of the Resurrection and the Day of Judgment; and excels works of the same period in S. Mark's.

Venice was so much less harassed than the rest of Italy during the reigns of the Byzantine emperors that art was less disturbed, but such as it was it was wholly Byzantine, except as regards sculpture. The mosaics of S. Mark's of the eleventh century are merely lifeless shadows,

without the faintest possibility of movement in the figures. Christ in the general decadence is the exact antithesis of the joyful, youthful Shepherd of the catacombs. The value and dignity of the decoration depends on the costly gold ground and the delicate arrangement of the small mosaic cubes. The twelfth-century mosaics of S. Mark's call for no special remarks, as they preserve the usual Byzantine types and treatment of this period.

In the lower church of Schwarzrheindorf, near Bonn, a good example of a twelfth-century painting of an apse is preserved. In a large circle is the seated figure of Christ teaching His disciples, who form two highly expressive groups at the sides. The figures are full of character and individuality, and it is particularly interesting to observe the choice of subject. I do not know of the existence of a single instance in all Italy of a figure of Christ in the most prominent part of the church (that is, the centre of the apse) engaged in doing anything but blessing. The didactic North does not care to dwell on such a passive idea. It makes the Saviour preach and instruct. The other subjects represented are the driving of the sellers from the Temple, the Transfiguration, and the Crucifixion.

The free spirit of the North revolted against the severe monotony of Romanesque architecture

THE RESURRECTION (HARROWING OF HELL)
Torcello

when it burst forth into the noblest poem stone has ever sung in Gothic architecture, and was the means of resuscitating the lost art of sculpture. The doorways and niches of the Gothic churches demanded figures, and in northern France, peopled by Gothic and Latin races, and in northern Italy arose the finest Christian sculpture of the world.

The cathedral of Chartres, which was rebuilt in 1120, but of which the greater part was again rebuilt in the thirteenth century, illustrates this development. The sculptures of the west façade have some of the Byzantine flatness and immobility about them, but when once the artists realised their freedom, we see with what bounds they progressed, when we study the noble sculptures of the side portals of the thirteenth century.

On the cathedral of Chartres is sculptured the most complete cycle of Christian themes conceived in theology. It represents the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis* in its historical, symbolical, and spiritual aspects. It is indeed not only the Bible in stone, but the history of grace in the soul, and it is not too much to say that the interpretation of these sculptures would tax the Bible knowledge of the average man of the present day to breaking-point. The Creator of the universe is Christ, and Christ reigns over all, with the hand of the Father in the clouds above Him. A volume might be written on the significance of

the figures which adorn this church built by the peasants as a labour of love, incited thereto by the fervent preaching of the Cistercian monks.

The Christ carved on the walls of Chartres is the sweet and gracious Christ of the early mosaics. The monkish ideal of a Christ who is the *Brother* and *Friend* triumphed over the ascetic Judge of the imperial East. At Amiens the most complete realisation in stone of the Cistercian preaching can be seen in that most benign and beautiful Christ standing between the portals of the cathedral, holding the gospels in one hand and raising the other in benediction. The *Beau Dieu d'Amiens* has not to this day been excelled, and it remains an eloquent witness of what the Church's conception of Christ was in the days we so placidly call "the dark ages."

Benignity and graciousness, combined with a tender and loving majesty, may be called the characteristics of the Christ of the thirteenth century. At Rheims is another exquisite idea of Him, as not the Judge, but the Redeemer at the Last Day, bearing the souls of the redeemed in His lap, the most loving and beautiful realisation of the Last Day in all art.

Mr. Ruskin is inclined to think that the rather later sculptures in Rheims are too dreamy, too flowing in drapery, too sweet and delicate, and he prefers the slightly more restrained and severe

LE BEAU DIEU D'AMIENS

work in Chartres. This is largely a matter of individual taste, for the works are absolutely in harmony with their surroundings, absolutely beautiful in themselves, and expressive of the very highest and noblest imaginations of the soul. Nothing to excel them, as regarded from the gospel point of view, has yet issued from the artist's hands.

Want of space forbids me to dwell upon the great Italian sculptors of the early Renaissance—Nicolo Pisano, Donatello, the Della Robbias, and the rest. What will be said about the contemporary painters will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to them also.

CHAPTER V

THE RENAISSANCE

The influence of the Franciscians on Art—Giotto and his followers—Giotto's conception of Christ—The Sienese emotional painters—Orcagna's pessimism.

THE revival of art in the twelfth century was enormously strengthened in the North by the religious enthusiasm raised by the preaching of Cistercian monks; and in Italy was inflamed by the burning words of S. Francis of Assisi, in the early thirteenth century. Men desired pictures of Christ which should approximate nearer to the mental images raised by S. Francis' ardent words than did the feeble, scowling Byzantine masks. In the mountains of Tuscany, amid some of the fairest, sweetest scenery in the world, the great Florentine Giotto cast aside the conventionalism of the East, and illustrated the life of Christ after the visual images of the monkish and Franciscan preachers.

For the first time for hundreds of years, Cimabue and Giotto painted the imaginations of the soul, and clothed these images with the life of

Nature. So little is known of Cimabue that we pass to his greater pupil, and we see from his work what the living popular conception of Christ was in his day. The identity between many of Dante's visual images and Giotto's paintings, as Mr. Berenson says, justifies the story of the friendship existing between these two great men.

People have invariably demanded of their artists that which interests them. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Christ was so beloved that pictures illustrating His life were the most popular artistic subjects, just as now the people demand of their artists pictures of popular murderers and royal processions.

Giotto and his school, following the arrangement of the *Biblia Pauperum*, gave the people what they demanded, and the life of Christ was blazoned forth on the walls and windows, delicately wrought in sculpture, and minutely written on vellum.

There is the same youthful spirit of enthusiasm about the art of the early Renaissance that there was in the mosaic work in the fourth century. Giotto's conception of Christianity indeed goes back to the time of the catacombs, and the same spirit of sublime joyfulness animates it. His conception of Christ is noble and dignified. He depicts Him full of tenderness, love, and

graciousness, but never does he forget that though He walked as a man among men, He was essentially God.

He preserves the early traditional type of the high brow, the oval face, the mild eyes, and the short beard; also a certain immobility of feature, perhaps the only relic of Byzantine influence which he ever felt, and which arose in both cases from a reverence for the serenity of Divinity.

His series of the life of Christ painted on the walls of the Arena Chapel at Padua ought to be studied in detail, and Mr. Ruskin's little book on the subject is full of interest. In so small a space only a few of the series can be alluded to here, and we will see how Giotto treated the most difficult subject in art, the Resurrection of the Lord.

To Giotto it was not so much the historical fact of Christ rising from the dead which he endeavoured to portray, but Christ's revelations of Himself to the individual soul. The Resurrection, to Giotto, was a constant living reality, not merely a cold historical fact. To him as to S. Francis, Christ *is* life, and is continually revealing Himself to humanity.

The keepers lie around the tomb as dead men; types of the men of the world who would not believe, though One rose from the dead. They do not even see Christ, but Mary, the woman

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

Giotto

who loved, kneels in full vision of Him. The angels watch with awe, and the bare earth breaks into blossom under the Saviour's feet, while dry branches clothe the wintry hills.

Quite different is his other rendering of the Resurrection. The Paduan one reveals Christ to the soul of man. This is a meditation on Christ in His own power and glory, the Lord of Life. The earth has opened, and Christ issues forth from the tomb, triumphant over hell and death. There are no angels, no witnesses ; no accessories are needed. Instinct with life, glowing with majesty and power, Christ as a spirit glides forth from the tomb, but bearing the mark of the nails on His glorified body, which seems to mount up by its own intense vitality. As a meditation on the unseen mystery of the Resurrection, Giotto comes nearer to a real revelation of Christ in this picture than almost any other artist.

The Raising of Lazarus, in the Paduan series, is another of his most suggestive pictures. The dead man, bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and with the napkin still about his face, has come forth obedient to the Word. Two muffled figures stand beside him, and Peter, looking to the Lord for command, prepares to loose him and let him go. Martha and Mary fall at Jesus' feet, while He with hand uplifted calls the soul back to the obedient body. There are no vulgar

conditions of mere physical horror, but a grave, awed sense of the supernatural. The call is to the soul, and the resuscitation is spiritual as well as carnal.

Giotto's drawing is sometimes faulty, but never dead or trivial. He seems to have loved and studied Nature, and used her to clothe the thoughts of his heart. That so serious and intense a master should have many followers of his methods was inevitable. All that could be copied in him was copied, but his deep insight and dramatic power were essentially his own. His best pupil, Taddeo Gaddi, did almost as good work as his master, but he lacked the true insight of Giotto, though he painted noble pictures, full of poetic and devotional feeling.

There is a drawing of his in the British Museum representing Christ's entry into Jerusalem, which is one of the most adequate and beautiful renderings of the subject. Christ, seated on the ass, has allowed the reins to fall unheeded on her neck, trusting to the patient animal's dutifulness to follow her appointed way. With hand lifted in benediction, He goes serenely on amid the treacherous cries of false welcome, which must have been bitterer than the frank insults of the following days; indeed, it was amid the futile cries of welcome from false friends that we read He wept, not under the howls of the blasphemers.

Equally noble and beautiful is Christ bearing the Cross, in S. Croce, Florence, where He turns His head to gaze sorrowfully at His mother as He passes her by. In the works of these early artists it is interesting to observe how invariably they represent our Lord as a dignified and serene person. There is no sense of strife and quarrelling or controversy in their idea of Him. In the pictures of the Passion He bears all with the same grave self-control. To represent Him as if shrieking and howling with pain, as later artists did, would have been an unspeakable horror to these devout minds impregnated with the gospel. In this picture of the carrying of the cross, Christ's attitude is singularly beautiful and noble. His arms are outstretched, and "embrace the wood," as the old hymn sings. Mary's hands are held out towards Him with an irresistible maternal action. He sympathises with her agony at not being able to comfort Him by her touch.

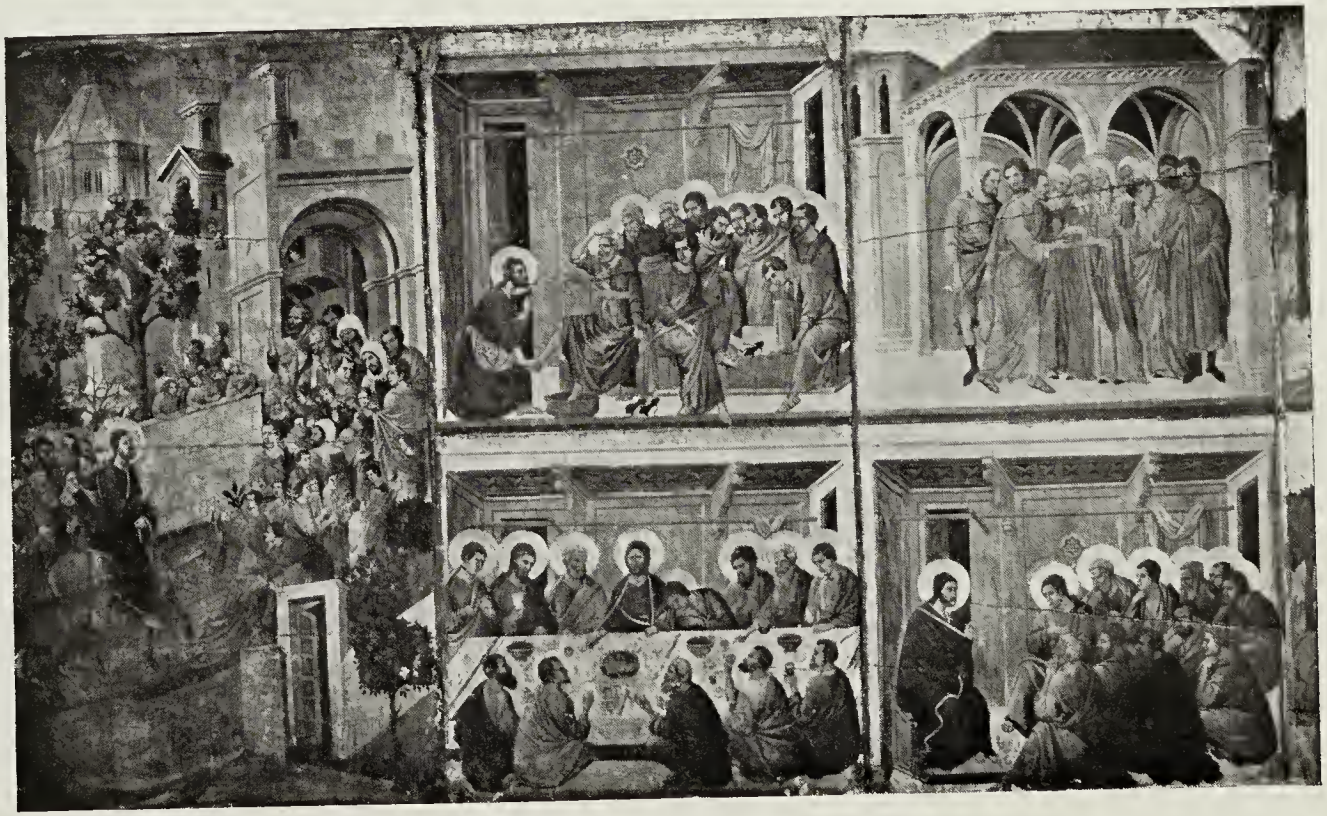
Equally restrained in sentiment is Taddeo Gaddi's Entombment and Resurrection, in the Accademia, in Florence. There is none of the brutal repulsiveness of the indecently crumpled limbs and distorted aggressive lifelessness of later masters. Christ's body here is composed with reverent straightness, laid on the winding-sheet as it is gently lowered into the tomb. Unable to relinquish Him, the mother still holds His head

upon her arm as she gazes into His face, while S. John presses a last kiss on the pierced hand, and Mary Magdalen beholds His feet as she draws the cloth around them. The weeping women, Mary's faithful friends, and the apostles stand reverently by. The face of Christ, in its awful serenity, is emaciated by the suffering He has undergone, but there are holy purity and stillness in it, which show how the artist must have dwelt upon the fact that death wipes out all the sorrow of humanity, and restores even the flesh to its divine hope.

Above this most lovely and pathetic group is the form of the risen Christ, holding the cross and banner of victory, and, with uplifted hand, blessing the faithful followers. This combination of subjects in one picture was common, and expresses the artist's concern to show forth in his work the real vital *meaning* of a particular scene. In this instance it shows the tomb leading to the Resurrection, earth to heaven, temporal sorrow to eternal joy.

The followers of Giotto and Taddeo Gaddi, lacking their spiritual insight, endeavoured to make up for this defect by painting the obvious and commonplace. We need not concern ourselves with them, but pass to contemporary art in Siena.

Giotto's great contemporary, Duccio di Buon-



SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST
Duccio

insegna, had almost as great gifts as the apostle of Florentine art. To understand the reason for his inferiority we must enter into the mind of the men of his time. Mediæval art in its essence was religious art, for religion was the real mainspring of life. Men did not live up to their ideals—far from it—but when they went wrong they knew they were wrong ; and if they had time they often repented, and mostly, even the worst of them, honestly wished to be better men. Sinning for the sake of sinning was not fashionable in those days, and the great majority of people respected and admired religion, and genuinely delighted in religious pictures, for they helped to make them "feel good."

Duccio fulfilled the requirements of the mediæval man. He painted the life of Christ in pictures which glow like jewels with colour. He pondered over the gospel story until he seems to have felt in himself the very emotions of those concerned. He shows them sometimes doubtful, sometimes casual, sometimes overwhelmed. His rendering of emotion is so keen, so poignant, that it sweeps the spectator away ; yet with all this intensity of feeling his pictures are often less convincing than the more self-contained, restrained pictures of Giotto.

The reason, as Mr. Berenson points out, is that Duccio was a pupil of Byzantium. He was the last

great conservative artist, and he painted traditional scenes, not actual life. The magnificent corpse of the East he clothed with the sumptuous garments of his own emotional fancy ; but it was a corpse, and though his genius was so great that he almost made the dead to speak, its grave clothes bound it too tightly. The shepherd lad from the mountains had never come within its deadly embrace. Giotto's pictures glowed with the revived religious life of the Franciscans. Duccio's represent the traditional aspect of an historical religion.

While the Florentine artists studied life and nature, the gentle Sienese painters gave many lovely dreams to the world. The oriental origin of their art is seen most distinctly in Simone di Martini, and in the Liverpool Institute we have a charming little picture of his which illustrates the difference in conception between the two schools.

The subject is the finding of the boy Christ by His Mother. Giotto and his followers represent the scene historically and symbolically. They show the interior of a building, and the various personages concerned, all in the most probable and lifelike attitudes. Simone, on the other hand, uses no accessories whatever, but represents his figures against a gold background, and seizes on the predominant *feeling* of the incident, and repre-

sents the purely emotional attitude, namely, the Mother's anguish and the Child's obedience to the divine call.

Mary, utterly exhausted by the three days' search, has sunk to the ground, and is searching for comfort and explanation in the book of the Prophecies of her mysterious Child. While so seeking He comes before her, brought back by S. Joseph, who with his arm tenderly round the child, points out to Him the suffering His Mother is undergoing. Calm and dignified, making no attempt at justification, with a rapt look in His dreamy eyes, as if He had been brought straight from the vision of His eternal Father, stands the Divine Son, His arms meekly crossed, subject to the earthly parents while listening to the heavenly. It is a little lyrical poem complete in itself.

This intense depth of feeling of the Sienese painters required the severest restraint to prevent its falling into mere sentimentalism. With the passing of its greatest men it did fall into such an abyss of frantic emotionalism that it never rose again.

With the rise of the Dominican order, a more intellectual movement overspread the emotional religion of S. Francis. The preaching of S. Dominic roused a vast enthusiasm for theological truth. Theology had languished during the creep-

ing in of what later became the Calvinistic heresy, that Christ did not die for all men, but only for a favoured few. Religion was so great a part of life in the thirteenth century that the intellectual revival demanded its outward manifestation, and people required in their pictures more than a representation of either historical or devotional truth, for they wanted to understand the meaning of the facts of life. Giotto and his followers had also taught men to look on the world around them, and appreciate its beauty, beauty of form, as well as beauty of colour. At present, art was still the handmaid of religion, but the flood of classicalism that poured over Europe soon produced its effect in making beauty, as *beauty*, paramount, and the Dominican idealists, who valued the facts of this life only in proportion to their elucidating or moulding the life of the next world, after a brief triumph, succumbed to the popular worship of beauty.

We see the foreshadowing of the approaching paganism in that great and terrible picture, Orcagna's Last Judgment. The pessimism so characteristic of modernity cast a foreshadow on this great man's soul. The early Christian Giottesque conception of Christ as always merciful, always loving, gave place in Orcagna to a fearful sense of His inexorable justice.

With all the early Italian painters of the Re-

CHRIST AS JUDGE

Orcagna

naissance, we find their best and greatest efforts expended on representing the Passion of Christ. Apparently, they considered this the culminating expression of His love, and they never tired of dwelling on it. In Pisa, in Florence, in Assisi, in Genoa, in Orvieto, in numberless churches and manuscripts, we find these scenes dwelt on, as we find them in the sculptures of the fourth and fifth centuries. As realistic conceptions of historical facts, they are often inadequate; as devotional meditations, they are often exquisite. Christ invariably is the Lamb who before His shearers is dumb. He bears all, endures all, with divine patience, and divine dignity, with no resentment, no personal feeling of indignation or anger.

In Orcagna we see the first departure from this ideal.

Giotto, no more than Orcagna, forgot that justice is necessarily awful and inexorable, but to him the love of Christ encompasseth all, even the lost. Orcagna shows Christ seated in an aureole of glory. Angels bear the instruments of His Passion, and summon the dead from their graves. His Mother, overcome with compassion, pleads beside Him, but in vain, for His hand is raised not in blessing, but in repudiation; the wound in His side is not for healing, but in condemnation.

An archangel cowers at His feet in awe, hiding his face in terror.

Below, the dead are sternly marshalled to right and left, with that inexorableness which makes it one of the most terrible pictures in the world.

CHAPTER VI

ITALIAN SCHOOLS

The influence of the Dominicans on art—Fra Angelico—The frescoes in S. Croce—Piero dei Franceschi—Signorelli—The Lippis and Botticelli—The Florentine school.

THE influence of Giotto was felt for more than a century after his death, and his religious ideals may be said to have culminated in Fra Angelico, who is *par excellence* the painter of the Spiritual Christ.

The dominant belief of the Dominican was the superiority of the soul to the body. This overwhelming consciousness of the spiritual led Angelico, as it led the artists of the catacombs, to the use of symbol. His figures are not mere copies of flesh and blood, but are the semi-transparent coverings of a spiritual entity. The most perfect example of his idealistic work is in his picture of the Transfiguration. The intensity of his realisation of the actual meaning gives to his symbolical figures even a greater realism than the naturalistic historical treatment of later artists.

Fra Angelico brings before us that which most

impressed the dazed eyes of the wondering apostles, the radiance of the divine face, and the supernatural brightness of His garments. There is no superfluity of earthly detail ; the very mount is but a conventional rendering. Bewildered, confused, and overwhelmed, the apostles sink to the ground, and we, with them, are startled, for in the very moment of the Triumph we see in the arms stretched wide to bless the attitude of the Cross, for it was thus Christ should bless the world.

On each side appear out of the radiance the heads of the two who saw Him long before in vision, Moses and Elias, pure intelligences worshipping Him above. Symbolising the Faithful, Mary the Virgin, and S. Dominic, kneel at the corners below.

The colour is of the purest white, and pale light shades of yellow, and tenderest blue. The light streams through it ; and of this, one of the most divinely conceived pictures in the world, may it be said of its author, " His shadows are colour."

Nowhere can the influence of the Dominican Order on art be better shown than by studying the walls of the convent of S. Mark in Florence, which its great painter illustrated with his own conceptions. It will be seen from them that a development had taken place from the earlier Renaissance artists, for not only had art to be

dramatic, historical, devotional, it had also to be symbolical and intellectual in its teaching.

The first object which meets the eye on entering is Christ on His Cross, the beginning and end of the spiritual life. S. Dominic as the guardian of his children is at His feet, perpetually interceding with Him for them. Over the doors are five beautiful lunettes. The one over the refectory is Christ with the wounds (a marvellously beautiful face) to call on the brethren to remember that to eat and drink is to be done to His honour, who said, "I thirst."

Over the door of the guest-house is another equally beautiful. Christ is garbed as a Pilgrim, for it is in His poor that He comes to the house of God. Two friars with tender courtly gestures come to meet Him, and take Him by the hand; they know not that He is Christ, but only see that a brother has come seeking charity. He looks into their eyes, and His weariness is breaking into a smile as He reads in their faces the love He came to teach. What more beautiful illustration could be given of the Dominican order, which went out into the highways and hedges, seeking for the lost, because they were Christ's?

In the chapter-house, where the serious business of the order was transacted, is the great Crucifixion, hallowing all with love and sacrifice.

It is interesting to compare the different points

of view taken by Giotto under Franciscan influence, and Fra Angelico under Dominican. Giotto painted the weeping women, the disputing soldiers, as forcibly and dramatically as he could, and mingling the supernatural with the historical aspect, the sky is alive with flame-like angels.

Fra Angelico's Crucifixion is a theological statement full of spiritual significance. His Christ on the cross is the divine sacrifice. It is not merely the depicting of an event, but an illustration of the divine dealings with man in his Redemption. Fra Angelico neither attempted nor desired to place a correct rendering of the *actual* scene before men's minds, but the spiritual significance of the greatest act of Creation.

At the foot of the cross he represents the congregation of the Faithful, in the persons of the devout women, the apostles, the great doctors, and spiritual fathers of the Church.

There is no landscape, no accessories, not even an angel. Christ, the central fact of life, the author and essence of life, is dying for the sins of the world. His calm, beautiful face is inclined on one side. There is no pain on it, only love, for pain is swallowed up in love now the supreme moment has been reached, and He *has* fulfilled His Father's will.

His arms are wide to embrace the world, and a holy peace broods over all. The saints adore,

THE TRANSFIGURATION

Fra Angelico

and the sinful, crucified beside Him, ask mercy, and revile Him, as the world has done ever since. The two pictures appeal to two classes of mind, both equally beloved of God, useful and efficacious.

In the cells "the little windows into heaven," which the pious friar designed his pictures to be, we find the following by Fra Angelico, most of the others being by Fra Benedetto di Mugello :—

Cell 1. Christ appearing to S. Mary Magdalen.
,, 2. The Entombment.
,, 3. The Annunciation.
,, 4, 14, 25, 37, 38, 40, 41. The Crucifixion.
,, 5. The Nativity.
,, 6. The Transfiguration.
,, 7. The Buffeting of Christ.
,, 8. The Resurrection.
,, 9. The Coronation of the Virgin.
,, 10. The Presentation in the Temple.
,, 11. The Madonna and Child, with S. Thomas Aquinas and S. Augustine.
,, 24. The Baptism of Christ.
,, 28. Christ bearing the Cross.
,, 31. The Descent of Christ into Hell.
,, 32. The Sermon on the Mount.
,, 33. The Betrayal.
,, 34. The Agony in the Garden.
,, 35. The Last Supper.
,, 36. The Nailing to the Cross.
,, 39. The Adoration of the Magi.

Only one picture of this most satisfying life of Christ written in art can be described here. It is the First Eucharist.

With the simplicity of his age, the artist has painted his own refectory, showing the view across the courtyard through the windows. There was no frantic struggle after archæological detail in those days, but instead there is a deep and solemn air of holiness; a wonderful calm pervades the whole picture, a sacramental grace.

The white draped table is on two sides of the plain cloistered room. Behind it stand in lowly reverent attitudes eight of the disciples. Four others have left their place by the table and kneel at one side, not to impede the Christ, as, chalice and paten in hand, He walks round the inner side administering as He goes. Present in spirit, though not in the flesh, the image of Mary, His Mother, kneels on the opposite side. It gives, so to speak, that spiritual delineation of what *must* have happened. Walls, clothes, faces, must have been different, but this is the spiritual impress on the soul, the ethereal essence, so to say, of the material fact. I do not know that the art of picture-making, as it was conceived in the Middle Ages, can go further. Perhaps even our enlightened ideas do not carry us very much farther forward than to get the impress of things not seen.

His angels are too well known to need comment, but a word should be said of his exquisite landscapes, among the first in art which can be identified with actual places. His love of flowers seems second only to his love of angels. He stars his grass with loving rendering of the very weeds we press beneath our careless feet, and his lilies and roses are fit for heaven itself.

Of the limitations of his artistic powers it is unnecessary to speak. Art for art's sake had no existence for him, for with him art was symbolical writing used to express the diviner visions of the soul.

The immense influence exercised by Masaccio in Florentine art concerns us but little here, as he rarely, if ever, painted Christ, except as an infant. Brief as was his career, he gave an impulse to Florentine art which probably preserved it from following exclusively the lines of artists such as Castagno, whose chief idea was the display of their individual powers; but Andrea dal Castagno possessed a fine poetic insight, as we can see in that weird picture of his in our National Gallery (1138).

In the gloom of the thick darkness which hung over all the earth, Mary and John stand on each side of the cross. The dark hills of the desolate landscape under the gloomy sky fitly emphasise the spiritual desolation of the mourners. The

emotion of the scene is more Sienese than Florentine, and is an exceedingly interesting example of that subordination of nature to mood, which was believed to have been invented in much later days.

Belonging neither to the Sienese nor the Florentine school, and less known than his brilliant pupil Signorelli, we get that remarkably original painter, Piero dei Franceschi, who gives us another and quite individual conception of Christ.

He can fortunately be studied in England by means of his three pictures in the National Gallery.

His representation of Christ is not that of conventional beauty, but there are few more significant and convincing figures than that shadowy, faintly tinted Christ, standing in the pale running water of His baptism, while the Forerunner performs that strange and mystic rite in the solemn presence of the unearthly angels, who stand beneath the trees.

His pictures are neither devotional nor emotional, still less are they historical. In some purely individual way of his own he, so to speak, paints the vital essence of the scene, with as little use of accessories of time and place as possible. No other picture that I know conveys the mystical and utterly inexplicable qualities of that scene in the Jordan as this picture does.

We can see that Piero did not paint *his* par-

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Piero dei Franceschi

ticular visual image of Christ. Such representations, beautiful as they may be, can never satisfy any but the artist, even if they do him, for we all bear in our minds our own particular visual image of a person. Hence the absolutely unconvincing nature of even the greatest artists' pictures of Christ. Symbolical pictures such as Fra Angelico's, and what for want of a better word I must call transcripts of vital essentials of being, such as Piero's, bring up in the spectator's mind nobler images and more convincing impressions than the more carefully studed compositions by technically greater artists. Every one sees in a picture what he brings to that picture, and Piero makes us bring our best.

To his great pupil, Signorelli, there came with an overpowering mastery, a passionate sense of the beauty of the nude. By temperament inclined to scenes of violent action, he becomes occasionally ludicrous in his anxiety to show us that his figures can really move.

In his Flagellation of Christ, now in the Brera, he is much more concerned with the muscles of the executioner's legs and the modelling of the shoulders of Christ than he is with either the significance or the emotion of the scene. The person of Christ is absolutely feeble, and the face has a semi-intoxicated expression, but the flagellator's legs are beautifully drawn.

We see the same love of good drawing in his Crucifixion. Christ is simply a study of muscles. It would have been, perhaps, more satisfactory if he had painted the two thieves instead.

There is some originality of conception in his Dead Christ upheld by Angels, in S. Niccolo, Cortona, but it is an extremely unpleasant picture. A stunted, drooping figure, with over-developed shoulders, and thin legs, and an ignoble face drooping over the shoulder, is upheld in a slanting position on a small marble tomb by a very perfunctory angel whose arm is evidently tired. Two other unsympathisers hold the instruments of the Passion, while S. John Baptist lifts the hand of exhortation to a group of saints.

There is more pathos in his Deposition in Cortona. Christ lies stiff in death, half-supported on the knees of his fainting mother and S. Mary Magdalen. A beautiful and pathetic group of women mourn over Him.

His great fresco of the Last Judgment, in the Cathedral of Orvieto, is considered by Morelli as unequalled in the art of the fifteenth century, but it is beside our subject, as the figure of Christ is said to have been executed by Fra Angelico.

In the Santa Casa, at Loretto, is his most dignified conception of Christ, where He stands with uplifted arm, showing His side to S. Thomas.

THE ADORATION OF THE INFANT CHRIST
Filippino Lippi

Of all great painters Signorelli is the painter of ignoble and feeble Christs.

The two Lippis, the painters of some of the most exquisite pictures in the world, so rarely depicted our Lord save as an infant that we must pass them by, and regard Fra Filippo's great pupil Botticelli, for it is in his work that we see in all its terrible intensity the weight of the new heathenism on a naturally pious soul. Nowhere in art does such heartrending anguish dwell as in the eyes of his lovely Madonnas and exquisite angels. The shadow of the sword which should pierce Mary's breast is ever present, never once does she even smile at the caresses of her Child. The natural piety of Botticelli led him to the realisation of some of the most pathetic and spiritual dreams of the Madonna and Child ever wrought by man, but they are so isolated in their anguish that they may be called terrible visions of the gulf between such awful purity and the common state of man.

The most deeply spiritual vision of the Nativity ever painted is that incomparable poem on the walls of our National Gallery, by Botticelli. It not only illustrates the stable of Bethlehem, but the results of Christ being made man, in heaven, on the earth, and below the earth. The wild abandon of the joy of those higher than ourselves at the redemption of us is shown in the

ecstasy of the circling angels, who can keep neither limbs nor voice still in heaven, and who rush to bring laggard men to worship the new-born Babe, and fall in rapture on the necks of the dwellers in the shades of Limbo, carrying the tidings of great joy even to them.

Mary kneels in ecstasy gazing at her Child, the Divine Word, on whose infant lips He lays His finger, emblematic of the pact of silence between them. The white rock on which the holy manger stands is typical of the Church, and the dark pine trees are the symbol of shadowy, tangled, human life, used by Dante and others, while the river of dull red flowing below is the river of death, leading to Purgatory, where the souls of the just wait in expectation.

The heartbreaking anguish of Botticelli's Entombment (Munich), where the Adonis-like body of Christ falls across His mother's knees, to be caught in Mary Magdalen's arms, is the utmost expression in art of women's impotent heartbreak. The beardless Christ has the exquisite symmetry and loveliness of a marble God, and death has fallen upon Him as a beneficent immobility.

In the later Florentine painters one observes a greater concern to represent sumptuous scenes of ordinary daily life, as it was led in that colour-loving, luxurious, and artistic city, than to place the scenes of Christ's life before the spectators.

THE ENTOMBMENT

Botticelli

Out of deference to what had been the desire of the nations, the painters called their pictures by sacred names, but they show little or no anxiety to portray, either historically or devoutly, the scenes of Christ's life. Rich architectural decoration, gorgeous costumes, portraits of contemporaries, and great skill in grouping and in treating the problems of light and shade, led to the productions of magnificent pictures, but as pictures of Christ they are purely conventional.

The great idea of the later Florentines was a direct study of Nature. They, so to speak, saw what was around them, and adapted it to decorate a mental idea. They worked from the outside to the idea, not from the mental idea to the outside surroundings. The point of view had been altered since Giotto's days.

The pre-eminently popular painter of Florence was Domenico Ghirlandajo. He painted large, easily understood pictures, filled with the men and women of everyone's acquaintance, richly dressed, charmingly posed, much at ease with themselves and the public. There was never the least difficulty in finding out what the pictures were intended to represent, and there was no inconvenient amount of allegory or depth of hidden significance in them. They could be quite amply appreciated by the man in the street, and when appreciated by him they raised no inconvenient emotions, nor

made him desire to be on any higher plane than this pleasant, comfortable, richly decorated world of fifteenth-century Florence. Such an artist could not fail to be popular down to our own day, for there is nothing the inferior person so much resents as the pressure upon him by the superior person of information he is too dull-witted to reach by himself. That he was a painter with great gifts no one can deny, and no one either would affirm that he had one spark of genius. When he paints Christ, he takes the ordinary conventional type, invests Him in full flowing drapery, gives Him a decorous attitude, and there is an end of it. Any other person would have done just as well to fill his canvas.

One of his best renderings of Christ is in a fresco attributed to him in the Sistine Chapel. Although conventional, Christ is a noble figure. He stands with uplifted hand in the midst of a wide landscape. Before Him kneel S. Peter and S. Andrew, who have come obedient to His call; on each side are finely massed groups of spectators. It is an attractive and delightful picture to look at, with the rich costumes and the noble colour, but it seems chiefly to exhibit, as do most of his pictures, the artistic excellence and beauty of Florentine life.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

D. Ghirlandaio

CHAPTER VII

THE LOMBARDIC SCHOOL

The great painters of space—Perugino—Pintoricchio—Luini, the painter of the beauty of Christ.

IT is when we come to the Lombardic and central Italian painters that we realise how essential to the perfect presentment of man is his environment. These great artists painted not only man, but God's world, and so painted and blended them that they lift the soul to the contemplation of the ultimate perfection of both in heaven. The sunlight in Perugino's pictures bathes the spectator with a warmth that lifts the imagination to celestial light; we scarcely know how large the world is till we follow his wonderful landscapes, which are, after all, but the earthly background of the crucified Creator, as He recreates the spiritual life by His undying patience, as He hangs upon the cross.

The great masters of sunlit space (of which we see the beginnings in the Florentine hills, seen from the monk's cell of Angelico), Perugino, Pintoricchio, Leonardo, Raphael, were no longer

content to represent a flat surface behind their figures, but opened out almost illimitable space, and ended only in the lambent air, using Nature as the adjunct that it is to the finer emotions of the soul. It is this power which makes such otherwise non-religious painters as Perugino and Raphael two of the great religious artists, for though religion, as religion, sat lightly on them, they must have felt intensely that mysterious influence which Nature has on the artistic soul, lifting it to the pure contemplation of what may be called the "*Unknown* God."

A deep repose rests over most of Perugino's pictures; his figures do not attempt to move, and we know their lovely poses by heart. Each picture is a devout meditation, exquisite, beautiful, pious, and tender. He does not attempt to depict an historical event when he paints scenes from the life of Christ, but rather to present a lyrical poem.

His Christs are always patient, mild and gracious, pensive, but not tragic. His angels are among the most exquisite the mind of man has conceived, and his saints are full of love and adoration. With such gifts Perugino was able to show forth some of the most divine Infant Christs in existence. In his pictures in the National Gallery we see how exquisitely tender his rendering of childhood and womanhood is.

THE ASCENSION
Perugino

He is less successful in such subjects as the Resurrection and Ascension, favourite subjects with him, which he painted often, but never, as in the case of other great artists, quite successfully. His Christs are usually not so much rising as poised in mid air, and looking down either on the sleeping soldiers, or on the worshipping saints. He is particularly fond of the use of a vesica-shaped "glory," which he sometimes treats as a picture-frame, supported by angels.

Sympathising pity and loving sorrow and intense devotion are admirably expressed in his Crucifixion on the vault of the chapter-house in S. Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi at Florence. Christ, on the cross, seems perfectly still, the arms wide-stretched, the head bent with a look of tender love on the kneeling Magdalen. Her eyes are raised to His in adoration, entirely absorbed in Him. Her long hair, which has wiped His feet, falls over her shoulders in the delicate waves which Perugino delighted to delineate.

On one side is S. John, a noble figure, with outspread arms and uplifted face, lost in devout ecstasy, and on the other side Mary the Mother, with clasped hands, is bearing her sorrow in silence. Two kneeling figures of saints are at the ends, and behind is a glorious sweep of limitless Umbrian hill and plain, bathed in the tender

light of an Italian sky, the delicate trees outlined against its glow.

When he paints a subject like the Entombment, we see how completely this sense of spaciousness and the unity of nature with emotion animates him. A noble group of women lament over Christ, whose dead body seems the ultimate expression of the peace of the lovely earth lying under the golden air of heaven. The quiescence of the still Form is in absolute harmony with the silent hills and peaceful sky. The mother raises the dead hand to her lips, as she gazes in the quiet face with complete acquiescence in the will of God, expressed in "Behold the Handmaid of the Lord." There is nothing to mar the sense of peaceful completeness which a golden evening sheds upon the earth.

The more violent emotions of the soul Perugino did not attempt to paint, and his figures have little actuality or possibility of movement; but their pose is so exquisite that it is quite unnecessary to desire them to change it. His pictures are full of beauty, and fulfil all that can reasonably be expected of them. The fervour of the early Franciscan and Dominican ideas had toned down into a pleasant gentlemanliness among cultured Italians, and Perugino was not the man to paint unpleasantly rousing pictures; neither was Pintoricchio, for both were popular painters, who were

quite content to paint what their patrons desired, and beauty was becoming the desideratum of painters and patrons alike.

In spite of the absence of great imaginative qualities or supreme strength in handling, Pintoricchio's pictures are delightful illustrations of the popular art of his time. They are the truthful and sincere expressions of a sweet and picturesque fancy, not very deep, and rarely original, extremely lovable in their naïve simplicity, overflowing with beauty of line, and exquisite colour. The beauty of his environment had a supreme effect on the artist's soul, and picturesqueness is the dominant quality of his art. No artist revelled more sincerely in the exquisite beauty of that north Italian country; the intoxication of that sweet and sunlit air is wafted from his vast and idyllic scenes over the spectator's brow. He is an epitome of mediæval romance, and all the glamour of the beauty of chivalry broods over his pictures.

His Christs belong to the serene Perugino type, they express no strong emotion, only sweetness, mildness, benignity.

One of his most characteristic pictures is his Christ bearing the Cross, in the Palazzo Borromeo, Milan, in which his superb qualities as a master of decorative art, and his handling of wide space are Arcadian in their simplicity and direct-

ness. It is a purely poetic rendering of the scene, for the light of the dying sky falls full on the red-robed figure of Christ bearing a white cross superbly on His shoulder, as He marches as a victor towards the gloomy, rocky defile, led by a groping, peasant figure. The soldiers and the wailing women follow the Victor to His Triumph, and a vast expanse of the world looming in twilight under the glowing sky stretches to the far distance. This idyllic treatment of the subject is Pintoricchio's own, and, as far as I know, is unique, and ranks with Bellini's passionate poem of the Agony in the Garden, in our National Gallery.

The best known of Pintoricchio's pictures is the Finding of the Child Christ in the Temple among the learned men, and is one of the most beautiful illustrations of Christ as a boy. The serious, thoughtful face, with the clustering golden hair and the rapt eyes, form an ideal of lovely youth.

Pintoricchio was among the last and greatest masters of tempera, and the peculiarly rich and deep blues and greens which he used can be seen in perfection on the walls of the Appartamenti Borgia, in the Vatican.

His picture in San Onofrio, in Rome, the Flight into Egypt, is one of the most poetic renderings of this scene. Mary rides serenely past, clasping

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT
Pinturicchio

CHRIST AS A YOUTH
Luini

her Child in her hands, her eyes and soul raised heavenwards, while the palm trees bow their heads as they pass; and in the distance are seen the legendary incidents of the journey.

The painter, *par excellence*, of the beauty of Christ is Luini, the artist who never laid an ugly line, drew a hateful face, or thought an ignoble or impure thought. Luini hated sin, and spiritualised earthly clay, until some of the radiance of heaven shines through his faces.

His Madonnas are the most perfect representations of motherhood, wholly fond and tender, but never losing sight of the divinely appointed office of *protector* of the miracle entrusted to her. There is one of his Madonnas who turns from the Book of Wisdom she has been studying to look into her Child's eyes, to read the interpretation of His mystery, which is to my mind the most sublime expression of motherhood which Italian art has given us. Luini's Madonnas are not merely fond and protecting, they are the most highly intellectual of the many Madonnas painted. Their noble brows cover profoundly thinking minds, and, tender as they are, they are neither weak nor commonplace.

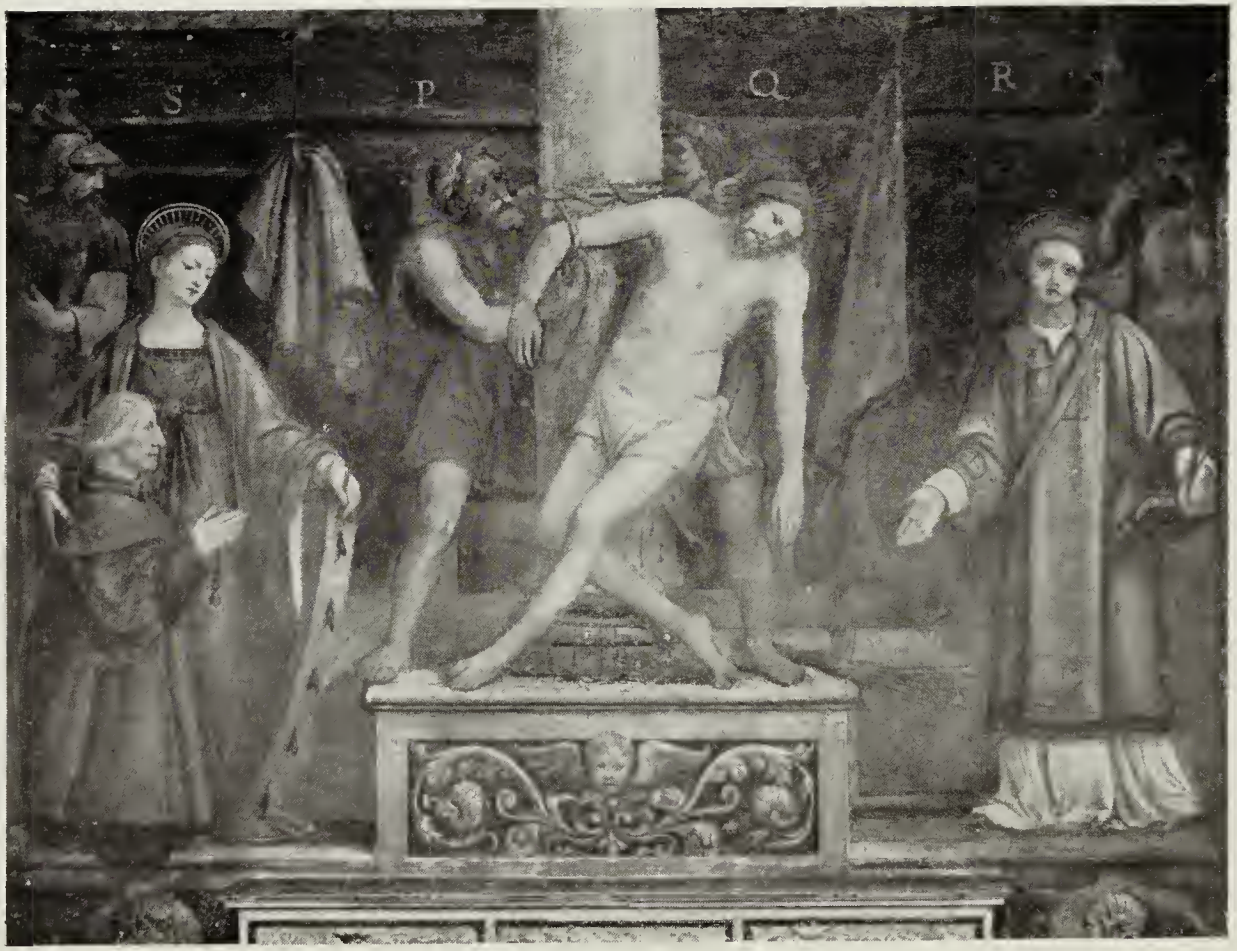
As a painter of Christ as a youth, Luini is unrivalled. In Milan is a half-length figure of Christ as a youth, blessing the world. The dreamy eyes have the rapt spiritual inner look

that comes of much indwelling of the spirit. No other painter has blended that peculiar youthful ecstasy with the benignant graciousness which is peculiarly Luini's own.

We have an example of his youthful Christ in the National Gallery (18), where Christ as a young man, older than in the Milan picture, is disputing with four aged Pharisees. The face is the same, but has not the haunting mysticism of the Milan picture. The long, beautiful hands have been called effeminate, but they rightly express the extreme, delicate perfection of perfect youth.

But it is in the little church at Lugano that Luini can be seen in his chief excellence, as it was in the pale and tender tints of fresco painting that his delicacy and grace were fully revealed. The fresco has been grievously mutilated, but the figure and face of Christ on the cross are extraordinarily beautiful and pathetic. As a devotional treatment of the Crucifixion it has few rivals. In common with the other Lombard painters he expresses the mystic side of devotion, quietism, approaching to languor, which differentiates all these northern artists from the more impetuous Florentines and Romans.

The difficulty in representing the Passion of Christ without repulsive details has been overcome by Luini in his Scourging of Christ, in the pathetically beautiful fresco in the Monastero



CHRIST UNBOUND FROM THE PILLAR

Luini

Maggiore, in Milan. Christ is being unbound from the pillar after His scourging. His fainting head falls as the soldiers lower the ropes, but is pulled back by the hair and reveals the beautiful face, inexpressibly patient, with the dignity of innocent suffering.

The exquisite grace of the sinking figure is so classically beautiful, and the subordination of physical horror to spiritual significance is so intense, that this picture is one of the few absolutely beautiful figures of Christ, which combine perfect beauty of technical excellence of line with overpowering spiritual significance.

Luini is one of the very few great masters of form and colour who used his gifts for the presentation of the divine beauty of God, rather than the glorification of his own powers. It was not of his command of drawing that he thought when he painted Christ at the column, nor of the mere physical beauty of perfect limbs, but the spiritual significance of the Innocent bearing the suffering of the guilty. The crimson rain on the white flesh was not to him a mere ecstasy of colour, but the scarlet iniquity which revealed the white light of God.

The influence of Leonardo da Vinci on Luini is undoubted, but Luini invested his Christs with a profounder divinity than any existing work of Leonardo's. Of the Christ of Leonardo's great

picture of the Last Supper, tradition only remains. It is said to have been of the most sublime beauty and divine graciousness, but unhappily it is too much ravaged by time and damp to present more than a faint shadow of what it was. Unfortunately for religious art, this great painter was more concerned with a multitude of worldly things than he was with painting Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

VENETIAN SCHOOLS

Bellini and his protest against the luxuriousness of Venice—Carlo Crivelli—The cessation of the demand for the life of Christ in art—Giorgione—Titian—Tintoretto the last of the Seers of Venice.

IN the fifteenth century, when Venice was at the height of its prosperity, its citizens did not want pictures which moved them to any inconvenient emotions, such as devotion or penitence. The inhabitants of the most beautiful city of the world desired enjoyment beyond all else, and they preferred pictures which represented the prosperity and luxury of the city they so proudly loved, to any dreams of celestial personages. In common with all who go down to the sea in ships, there was a certain rough and unceremonious piety about them, but judging by their popular art they only prayed on emergencies, and when the wind was against them.

The two greatest artists of the city, Giovanni Bellini and Giorgione, both struggled hard to be the religious painters they desired to be; Gior-

gione, with the more sensuous temperament, yielded most to the seductions of the gay city. The grave, pensive Bellini never wholly gave himself up. He did paint a few secular pictures towards the end of his life, but religion with him was no transient emotion, but the real motive of life. Amid all the luxury of the luxurious city he preserved his self-control, his grave sincerity, and his piety.

His infant Christs are among the most divine in art. They are never merely pretty babies, neither are they little old men ; but while they have the adorable innocence of childhood, they have the ineffable wisdom of the King the wise men could adore.

His stately and magnificent altar-pieces, where his grave sweet Madonna sits in noble humility, while boy angels sing and play at her feet to her Divine Child, and saints look up and adore, are among the most beautiful pictures in the world. They are devout and serious, never melancholy, but full of a rich and quiet gladness.

His pictures of Christ have an awful majesty. Beautiful he does not often make Him, for in the faces of his Christs Bellini fails more than in his treatment of the figure and general conception.

In an age when great magnificence was the chief desirability in life to most of his fellow citizens, Bellini seems to have fastened his affec-

PIETA
Giovanni Bellini

tions, and dwelt in his soul with his crucified God stripped of all and laid in the grave. His silent protest against the luxury of the city may be read in this choice of subject. No less than nine times did he paint Christ in His agony, or as dead, upheld by angels to the gaze of a heedless world. No passing stain from the luxurious city seems to have dimmed his soul; pure, devout, and serious, does he show himself in all his works.

In Venice are some of his most important pictures, a crucifixion, and two Pietàs; two more are in Rimini and Milan. In one of the latter the head of the dead Redeemer sinks against His Mother's face, as she clasps Him in her arms, and presses His wounded head in an agony to her. The rendering of the dead figure is so rhythmically beautiful that it approaches to the excellence of the antique, while it excels anything in classical art in its conveying of a pathos which is almost terrible.

The Rimini Pietà, which is in his earlier manner, has something of the same exquisite beauty of line. It is a half-length figure, supported by little angels, whose humming-bird wings and delicate limbs contrast fearfully with the immobility of the dead figure. The face is more calmly beautiful than the Milan picture. In both of these pictures, exquisite as are the drawing and modelling, it is evident that it was not to exhibit his

skill as an artist that Bellini painted them. He was first of all concerned to uphold before the eyes of the world the price that had been paid for its iniquity. He exerts all his skill to serve Christ in his art as nobly as he can, and of his own powers he does not think at all, a contrast to many of his contemporaries.

We possess one of his less important works in the National Gallery, of which the idea is said to have been Mantegna's, but Bellini in his treatment has made it all his own.

Christ kneels on a low mound, which looms against the pale flush lingering behind the distant hills. There is an intense solemnity in the darkling landscape, such as falls over the earth after the majesty of a great sunset, but here it seems to veil the skies in sympathy with the agony too great to be borne, even by God, of the sin of the world. It is one of the most striking instances of the subordinating of nature to emotion in the whole range of art.

The figure of Christ is literally squared to earth ; it has none of the slender grace of Bellini's art, for it is crushed together with the unseen weight laid upon it. In the foreground are the disciples heavily asleep. It is far from one of his best works, but in its intensity of pathos it reveals much of the beauty of Bellini's nature.

The grand and noble figure of Christ teaching,

now in the Dresden Gallery, shows Bellini at his best. In its dignity blended with benignity, in its single-mindedness and simplicity, it recalls the stately sweetness of the Christs of the early Christian ideals.

One of the most individual of painters was a contemporary of Bellini's, Carlo Crivelli, who seems to have carved out his own style and adhered to it. He has been called an unpleasant painter, and there is a hardness of form which is often unlovely. Frequently he is harsh and mannered, but through it all he remains a great artist, full of lofty ideals, and deeply skilled in the noblest mysteries of Venetian colouring.

His characters are strong, severe, and tender, never weak-minded nor vacillating. His Madonnas are among the most serene and lofty, though not always beautiful, and his child Christs are frequently adorable, as in the instance in our National Gallery, where the Child has fallen asleep over His Mother's hand, and clings to one of her fingers.

The Passion of Christ was a subject which especially appealed to this severe and sombre-minded artist. Triviality and lightsomeness are conspicuous by their absence in all this master's works. The very wreaths of fruit and flowers which festoon his pictures so frequently have nothing of joyousness about them. They are the

serious and solemn products of mother earth given to sustain her children.

In his pictures of the Passion the presence of emotion is so vivid that it approaches the grotesque. In the Pietà, in the Vatican Gallery, the faces are contorted with grief. Mary has that terrible drawn-back smile of intense pain, which almost becomes a smirk, and S. John seems to be actually shrieking.

The face of Christ is more dignified, but in that and in the Pietà in Mr. Crawshay's collection the half-opened mouth makes an unpleasant expression. Nevertheless the Crawshay picture is beautiful, dignified, and touching.

In the "Dead Christ supported by Angels" (602), in the National Gallery, the half-length figure is upheld by two boy angels. The face of Christ is very simple and dignified, and the whole treatment surpassingly reverent in its deep calm sentiment. These two great Venetians, Bellini and Crivelli, are excelled by none in their devotional handling of this mystical subject.

Carpaccio, with his gaiety, his love of beauty and cheerfulness, pleased his fellow-citizens far more than the serious Bellini and Crivelli. He chose secular stories, which interested the Venetians far more than the life of Christ. By this time, the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, the use of the *Biblia Pauperum* as a guide for

artists seems to have gone out of fashion, and artists ceased, to any great extent, to write the life of Christ in colour. Among the religious world there grew up a desire for great altar-pieces, representing enthroned Madonnas, with groups of saints adoring the Infant on her knee, and in the secular world people demanded portraits, scenes of historical interest illustrating the career of their city or country, or pagan or allegorical subjects. The demand was far greater for Greek gods and goddesses, which would show the artist's skill in delineating the nude, than for illustrations of the life of Christ.

The man who fought against the growing paganism in art was Giorgione, who by nature was one of the greatest religious artists of all time. Except the Madonna di San Sisto, there is scarcely any other Mary so lifted above the baser things of earth as Giorgione's at Castelfranco.

Unfortunately the spirit of his day seems to have sufficiently influenced this original and poetic artist of the very first rank to such an extent that, according to one of the best lists of his pictures, he only thrice painted Christ as a man.

One priceless treasure is now in Boston, and was at one time attributed to Bellini, but the divine haunting beauty of the face is unmistakably Giorgione's, who painted eyes that melt and haunt as no other artist did. An illustration of

it is better than a description, but attention should be drawn to Giorgione's following the traditional rendering of the carrying of the cross as expressed in the old hymn—

"Sponte libera Redemptor
Passioni deditus
Agnus in Crucis levatur
Immolandus stipite."

There is on Christ's face no thought of the suffering or the hardness. He goes blithely to His death, and as He passes turns His eyes, whose look saved Peter's soul, to draw some other soul to follow Him to Calvary.

This seems to me the finest delineation by any artist of the suffering Christ, for physical suffering is swallowed up, as we may believe it was, in love for those for whom He bore the pains, and is become so light a thing in that spiritual travail that He is not conscious of it, but while His arms embrace the hard wood, He goes by, seeking after, and searching for, the souls of men.

How great is the gulf between Giorgione and the old ideals, and Titian's brawny, struggling Christ in the Louvre, where as an outraged and indignant man He violently resents His executioners! The old idea of Christ had all but perished in the studios during the greatest period of Venetian art. He continues to be a historical

CHRIST CARRYING THE CROSS

Giorgione

person in a picture, but He is of no more significance to the painter than Jupiter or Venus.

Not always does Titian fall so low in treatment as in this Louvre picture, for in the Pinakothek at Munich he shows Christ in the same scene as patient and unresisting; but he has failed to give any spiritual meaning or significance to the incident.

In the Imperial Gallery in Vienna is one of his splendid pictures, which clearly indicates his attitude of mind. A magnificent group of gorgeously dressed figures are before a great flight of steps, on the top of which is another finely coloured and arranged group. Pilate, with fine gesture, speaks to the people, and by dint of examination an inert, heavy figure on one side can be seen, who represents Christ in the purple robe, a quite unimportant detail amid so much that is magnificent and beautiful.

That artistic sense of harmony of proportion, which is so essentially Italian, appears to have been Titian's to a pre-eminent degree, but to have left him wholly untouched in any but a technical sense. He was essentially a man of the world, and possibly his only real religion was his passion for colour.

Colour really seems to have taken the place with him that hymn-singing does with devout Protestants, and the rosary with a certain type

of Catholics. Colour was what Titian loved, with a love amounting to worship, and he gave to the world the highest that was in him, and, having given that, it is ungracious to expect him to fulfil other conditions beyond his powers.

Certain critics have called his Entombment of Christ, in the Manfrini Palace in Venice, "a great religious picture." It seems to me to be a great picture in every other sense, but certainly not in that. An extremely muscular and very heavy body, with the dull face in deep shadow, is by its enormous weight taxing the strength of the brawny men to the utmost, as they endeavour to carry it. The figure is crumpled together in an attitude felt to be repulsive in the helpless dead, and Christ's Mother is in agony beside it. It exhibits the artist's skill, and should have had a classical name given to it, not a Christian one.

The Christ of the Tribute Money, in the Dresden Gallery, is considered to be one of the greatest renderings of the face of Christ in art. It has not the coarsened features and too thick lips, with which Titian has often reduced the Redeemer's face to the level of a mere son of the soil, but it has in the curious mouth such a distinct likeness to his "Portrait of a Man," in the Old Pinakothek, in Munich, that it gives the picture an unpleasant air of portraiture. Titian was honestly not much interested in Christ. He much pre-

THE TRIBUTE MONEY
Titian

ferred the gorgeous scenes of his native Italy to the humble surroundings of the life of Christ, so when he does paint Him He gets lost amid the rich robes and splendid architecture. Out of one hundred and forty-three pictures, he only painted sixteen relating to Christ.

Another mighty colourist arose in the city of colour in the person of Tintoretto, though unfortunately, owing to the quality of the pigments used and bad restoration, but few of his pictures preserve their original beauty. The difference between him and Titian was largely that to Titian everything presented itself as a *spectacle*, to Tintoretto as an *emotion*. The appearance of things was all that concerned Titian; the significance was what enthralled Tintoretto to such an extent that he is often brutally careless in his treatment of unimportant details.

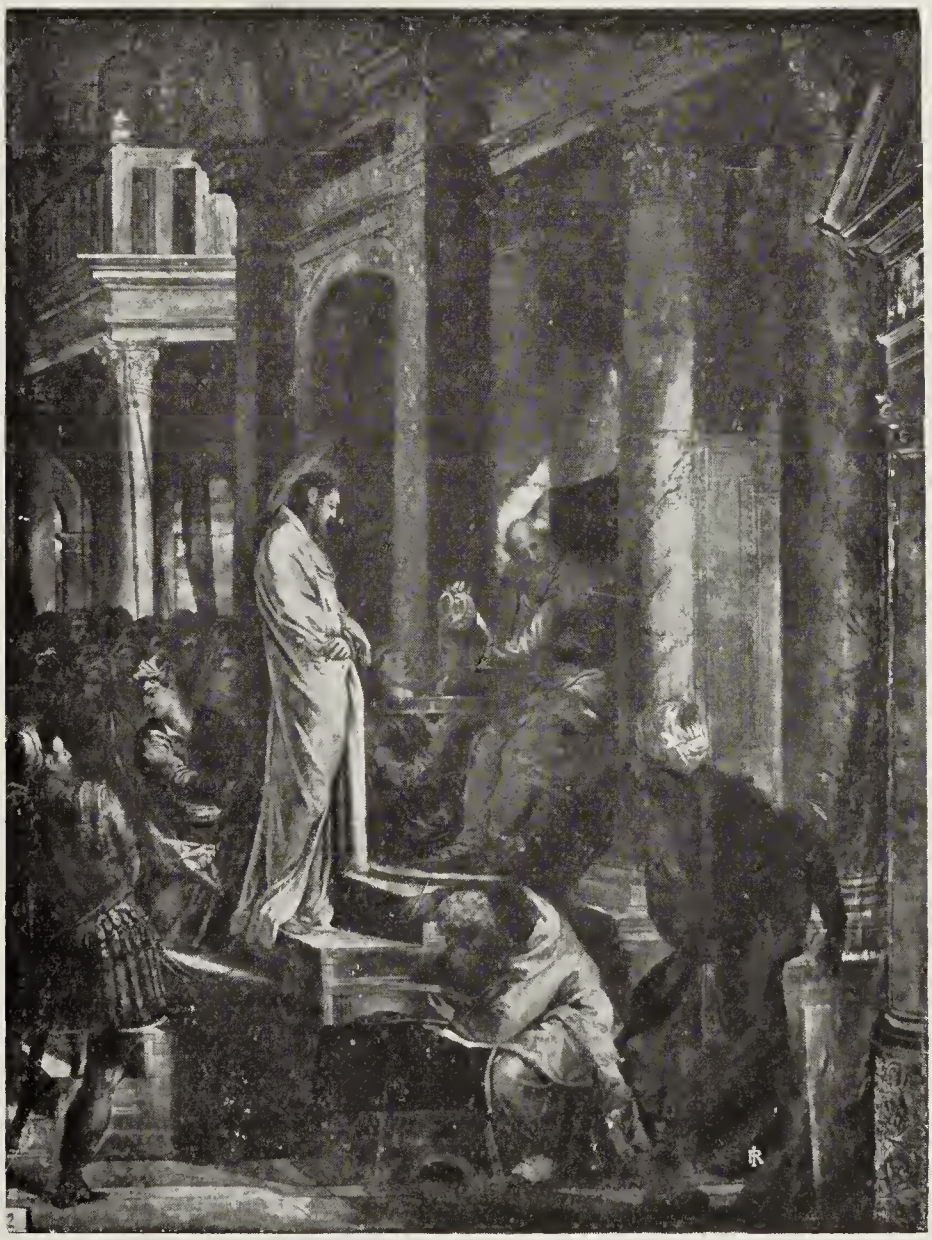
In his highly imaginative and personal treatment of the Crucifixion in the Scuola di S. Rocco, we see how deeply the meaning of it dominated his soul. In the centre of the picture, lifted above the world, is Christ alone on the cross; a sight so awful that the sun's rays are veiled and the darkness that can be felt is descending on the earth, but felt only in its true significance by the two types of woman, the sinless Mother and the sinful Magdalen, who sink appalled to the ground, but with eyes fixed on Christ. The rabble of soldiery,

peasants, and spectators are occupied in the raising of the crosses of the thieves, and have no eyes for Christ. The very beasts partake of man's indifference, for the horses of the soldiers are feeding on the withered palm branches of the triumphal entry.

Tintoretto borrowed from no man when he painted his picture of the Temptation of Christ, for he shows the Lord seated on high with the glory of His Godhead encircling Him, while He bends as a benignant Father towards the raging, agonised Satan, who, in all the beauty of his eternal youth, is frantically imploring Him to manifest the Godhead he recognises, but will not worship. Christ, in His divine pity, bears with him enough to deign to point out to him that not by bread alone does man live.

In his Christ before Pilate the silent figure in its white robe stands with all the dignity of the innocent and great. The divine reticence has rarely been so expressed on canvas as in that majestic figure dumb before His accusers, with the message too mighty to speak. Pilate's impotence and the rude anger of the stupid guards contrast fearfully with the majestic stillness of the Divine Lord.

Another example of his fierce dramatic intensity is to be found in his picture of the Baptism of Christ. By the courtesy of Mr. Ruskin's execu-



CHRIST BEFORE PILATE
Tintoretto

tors and Mr. George Allen, I am able to quote Mr. Ruskin's remarkable description of it. He speaks of Tintoretto's "considering the Baptism, not only as the submission of Christ to the fulfilment of all righteousness, but as the opening of the earthly struggle with the Prince of the powers of the air, which instantly beginning in the temptation ended only on the cross," and then continues:

"The river flows fiercely under the shadow of a great rock. From its opposite shore, thickets of close-growing foliage rise against the rolling chasms of heaven, through which breaks the brightness of the descending Spirit. Across these, dividing them asunder, is stretched a horizontal floor of flaky cloud, on which stand the hosts of heaven. Christ kneels upon the water, and does not sink; the figure of S. John is indistinct, but close beside his raised right hand there is a spectre in the black shade; the Fiend, harpy-shaped, hardly seen, glares down upon Christ with eyes of fire, waiting his time. Beneath this figure there comes out of the mist a dark hand, the arm unseen, extended to a net in the river, the spars of which are in the shape of a cross. Behind this the roots and understems of the trees are cut away by the cloud, and beneath it, and through them, is seen a vision of wild, melancholy, boundless light, the sweep of the desert; and the figure of Christ is seen therein alone, with His arms

lifted as in supplication or ecstasy, borne of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil."[1]

With these mighty imaginations of a great and devout mind, religious art in Venice may be said to end. Tintoretto was the last "Seer" in the City of Pleasure. After him we get the magnificent clothes and the fine decorations and the mere worldliness of Paolo Veronese, magnificent in all that appeals to the eye, but of no significance to the soul.

In his Marriage in Cana he is entirely occupied with the portraits and clothes of the rich company seated in the vast hall, surrounded with *loggias*, and waited on by gorgeous servants. Christ and His Mother may be discovered seated, woefully out of place, at one of the tables. The bare idea of the wine lacking at such a sumptuous entertainment is ludicrous, and so too is the idea that a carpenter's wife would dare to address such splendid servants on such a subject.

It is unnecessary to go into the details of others of this great painter's works, for as pictures of Christ they cannot be said to exist, and the same may be said of Bassano and the later Venetians.

As an instance of their conventionality, Sebastian del Piombo's large canvas of the Raising of

[1] Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, ii. 171.

Lazarus, in our National Gallery, is a fair specimen. The figure of Christ has life, divinity, and beauty, though it totally lacks any convincing individuality, and the spectator feels that it is a type rather than a personality. The attitude of Lazarus tearing the bandages from his limbs while his whole soul is fixed on Christ is really fine and convincing. The picture is overcrowded with figures tilted up so as to show a good deal of them in the background, and Kugler happily calls it a "copious composition."

The Venetians had so concerned themselves with the *appearance* only that the significance of external objects gradually sank out of sight. In Flanders the same commercial aspect eclipsed poetry and religion. Both peoples wanted pictures for house decoration, not for any meaning they might contain.

CHAPTER IX

THE LATER ITALIAN SCHOOLS

Raphael the painter of the Madonna and Child—Correggio, Sodoma, and the downfall of religious art—Michael Angelo the supreme expression of the Renaissance—The later copyists—The Spanish painters Murillo and Velasquez.

IT is unnecessary to try and discover who gave the first downward impulse to religious art. Men are the product of their age, and a passionate desire to be freed from the restraints of religion and morality swept over Europe with the Reformation. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had many of the characteristics of the emancipated schoolboy in the eagerness to be rid of restraints.

We see this clearly in art in the overwhelming desire of the artist to express wind in hard stone draperies, and the impression of distance on a flat surface, which was the ultimate goal of most artists' efforts. Mantegna was covered with contemporary glory for representing the dead Christ foreshortened so that the soles of His feet were the principal objects in the picture.

THE MADONNA DI CASA COLONNA
Raphael

Art ceased to be of any ethical or religious importance; its value consisted in technical excellence. When the significance of pictures was disregarded, the old subjects were treated from a different point of view.

The beautiful enthusiastic Raphael is, *par excellence*, the painter of the Virgin and Child of the fifteenth-century ideals. Both are made as graceful and beautiful as a man's dreams of fair women can reach. They rarely express anything but smiling beauty and grace, and they have always pleased everybody who cares for beauty and beauty only.

Once only does Raphael rise to the conception of the Eternal Mother as Giorgione saw her, and this once he eclipses all other visions of her. It is unnecessary to describe the San Sisto Madonna; the world is flooded with unworthy copies of it, which do not convey any adequate idea of the woman clothed with the sun of God's grace, and bearing the Divine in her arms.

Technical excellence has gone no further than Raphael's art, and no other vision of the Child and His Mother has blotted out this, his supreme expression of all that was in him. The world has almost unanimously agreed to call Raphael's Transfiguration one of the greatest pictures of Christ in the world, so it is with extreme diffidence that one ventures to allude to its shortcomings.

The technicalities of foreshortening are the qualities which immediately appeal to the spectator, who is compelled to be more interested in the question of how Christ poises Himself in the air than he is in the majesty of Christ's face. There is a femininity in the expression which it would be too much to call hysterical, but it is unpleasantly suggestive of earthly emotion rather than heavenly.

Fortunately, Raphael's Descent from the Cross is not very frequently met with. The body of Christ is in the very act of falling from the cross on his fainting Mother and S. Mary Magdalen. The men on the widely spread ladders are too far apart to hold it more than a moment longer; it must fall, and on the women.

His better-known picture of Christ falling beneath the cross is less horrible, though the anguished figure of Christ has little but human dignity about it, and the most adequate conception is the figure of His Mother stretching her arms towards Him as she is thrust back by the soldiers. Raphael is the painter of the happy young Mother, not of the Christ.

In Correggio's kicking, naughty boys, struggling with coquettish young mothers, we see the beginning of the downfall of the Divine Child. The Blessed Virgin was rapidly becoming only a pretty peasant woman, or a coquettish young

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

After Correggio

lady, so the Child before whom kings knelt and adored was becoming a noisy, self-willed boy, struggling and roaring for His own way.

But lower even than Correggio's was the ideal of the Divine Child to sink. He who called attention with loving insistence to the little sparrows fluttering about the Temple has actually been represented in art as delighting in the torture of a wretched bird, struggling in the tight grasp of the little S. John, who holds it before a cat. This monstrosity is by Barocci, and adorns the walls of our National Gallery. The trivial, empty-headed mother is pointing out the delightful incident, and S. Joseph is equally amused.

In Correggio's beautiful little picture of Christ taking leave of His Mother, belonging to Mr. R. H. Benson, full of rapturous and tender emotion, he is at his best as a painter of Christ, but even here the spectator feels that the arrangement of light and shade was of far greater interest to the artist than Christ, or His Mother, or their emotions. The folding of Christ's arms as he kneels before His Mother is somewhat theatrical, and so too is the Virgin's helpless pose.

Still worse is the picture of the Agony in the Garden, where the supreme interest in the painting is the blue and white of Christ's garments revealed in a blaze of what an irreverent critic called "celestial fireworks." The angel who kicks his

long legs at the spectator does not give an impression of conveying strength or comfort for any misfortune greater than the loss of a toy. Correggio's rendering of the face of Christ is tender and beautiful in all his pictures, but it is also weak and sentimental. Pagan Graces and lovely genii were what he really delighted in, and the artist paints best what he loves best. When he tries to paint Christ crowned with thorns, as in No. 15, National Gallery, he gives an exquisitely clear and finished painting, and the whole scene might have been copied from the stage. It meant nothing to Correggio, and it means nothing to us, but delicate flesh tints and beautiful drawing.

Andrea del Sarto, the painter of beauty, as he was called by his fellows, chiefly concentrated his religious sentiments on pictures of beautiful dark-eyed peasant women and children, which he called "Holy Families," but that is mere nomenclature. He does not often attempt to paint Christ otherwise than as a child. Pictures of Christ the Man do not seem to have been much in demand. Once he does really rise above the ordinary, when in his picture of the Last Supper he makes Christ lay His hand in tender restraint on the impulsive fingers of S. John, when he would passionately rise to ask the wild question, "Is it I?"

The head of Christ in the chapel of Our Lady

HEAD OF CHRIST
Andrea del Sarto

in the church of the Annunciation, in Florence, has an exquisite benignity and beauty of its own, full of tender sweetness, but it is marred by that touch of personal timidity so characteristic of del Sarto's own personality. There is neither the dignity nor the wisdom of the Godhead behind the amiability of the man.

In most of Francia's pictures of Christ he is content to produce rather wooden imitations of the conventional type, but his pictures are reverent and placid, and do not offend by distortions or trivialities. His enthroned Madonnas show him at his best, with perhaps the one exception of his well-known and beautiful Pietà in the National Gallery.

This is a fine and spiritualised rendering of the subject. The dead Christ lies across His Mother's knees, while an angel upholds His head, and another weeps over His feet. It conveys the intense pathos of the Mother's desolation and anguish, without the temporal horrors of time and circumstance, for it stands for all time as a sublime rendering of the text, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The man who might have been a great painter of Christ was Gianantonio Bazzi, known as "Il Sodoma," but we see in his pictures of Christ that reckless carelessness so characteristic of the

man. In his picture of the Resurrection the tomb is a small sarcophagus, quite inadequate to contain the body of the very muscular Christ, who, with a fearful suggestion of a popular toy, has obviously sprung from it, apparently let loose by a small boy angel, who has pulled the cover off. Another boy angel who declines to take any interest in the event is leaning his arms in a bored manner on the edge. There is a fine vigour and sense of life in the figure of Christ, but the face is quite expressionless. Can religious art fall much further than this conception of the consummation of the human race?

The epithet "irreligious," often applied to Sodoma's works with justice, is not applicable to his picture in the Accademia at Siena, of Christ bound to the Pillar. The noble dignity of the figure and the fine forehead and eyes of Christ are unhappily rendered less impressive than they should be by the weakness of the half-opened mouth and the feeble chin; but in spite of these defects there is just that touch of nobility of conception which reveals how much greater Sodoma could have been than he ever was.

Out of the host of painters of great technical excellence who flourished in Italy during the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, it is unnecessary to enter into detail here, for as far as the person of Christ was concerned, they had

become mere conventionalists. Their attention was absorbed by other subjects, and no new revelation of Him was given to the world through art until we come to Michael Angelo.

The supreme expression of the Renaissance, both in art and religion, is to be seen in Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. We see here a complete and final severance between the old restraint and reverence of the earlier artists, who drew their religious ideas from the teaching of the Church, and the modern mind. Orcagna was as fully impressed by the awfulness of the end of all things as Michael Angelo, and more impressed by the love of God, for none of his redeemed are fain to hide their faces in horror, but are so full of the love of God that it absorbs all else, as it did for S. John when he in vision gazed on the breaking of the seals and the end of time.

Michael Angelo has in his interpretation cast away all restraints of tradition or decency. His Christ is a furious naked giant inarticulate with rage and revenge, hurling torments upon the miserable writhing souls below. He is surrounded by naked gladiators apparently spurring Him to fresh efforts, whom Michael Angelo has the effrontery to name as the apostles. The blessed in heaven are struggling in the most indecent attitudes with the cross and pillar, which are obviously instruments of condemnation, not of

salvation. The blessed seem as full of writhing misery as the damned. The whole composition is the shriek of a lost soul, for whom all the hope of heaven has been eclipsed by a practical atheism. No words could so well express the gulf between this enormously gifted genius, the product, *par excellence*, of the new art and religion of the sixteenth century, and the artists of the fourth and thirteenth centuries, as this picture. The scandalised Pope, for whom it was painted, wished to have it destroyed ; fortunately for us that was not done, for as a human document it is of the highest interest and value, as showing what the religious ideas of the time resulted in. The freedom from the shackles of Catholicism was complete.

One of the most awful things in art is this great master's hopelessness. His dead Christ in the National Gallery has even the shadow of corruption upon it. There is no Resurrection morning to follow upon his Golgotha.

The benumbing influence of Michael Angelo on art can be studied in the later Florentine painters, who copied his muscular saints and left out the mighty force with which he animated them. Among the crowd of mediocrities, whose whole aim was to copy the mannerisms of Raphael and Michael Angelo, there are no painters who have given any revelation of Christ to the world. He

in art became of no more importance than any other well-known historical figure. The somewhat insipid, more or less graceful Man can be distinguished from other men by a halo, and the adherence to a well-established type of face and beard, but neither to the artist nor to the public was He a personality of any great importance.

The brothers Carracci made a praiseworthy attempt in Bologna to found a school for the training of painters, wherein the students were invited to copy the drawing of the Roman artists, the colour of the Lombards, the life of the Venetians, the symmetry of Raphael, and of Michael Angelo "la terribil via." They and their followers produced, as might be expected, respectable and conscientious works, innocent, for the most part, of imaginative genius.

The mere feeling after beauty without attaching any significance to it led to Guido Reni's producing some of the most repulsive religious pictures in existence. Their cheap and trivial sentimentality have made them widely popular. His claim to be an idealist appears to lie in his utter failure to produce a picture with any impressive qualities of actuality. He should have painted pretty girls in drawing-rooms, and not attempted to paint Christ crowned with thorns, as he most reprehensibly essayed to do.

Carlo Dolci is another sinner of a similar

type. The thought of a spiritual existence was wholly unconceived by him, and for the most part by the painters of his day. They were absolutely content with prettiness, and desired nothing better than lovely flesh tones and smooth surfaces. The Mother of Sorrows became in their hands a bashful young lady with eyes cast down before a too bold admirer, as Sassoferrato has represented her on the walls of our National Gallery, and Guido Reni's Christ crowned with thorns is chiefly noticeable for the purity of the clean flesh tints and the sentimentality of the expression.

By the seventeenth century we see how completely the flesh had overpowered the spirit in Christian art. The painter was no longer the teacher or seer, not even a preacher; he had become a handicraftsman, and there he has remained.

In Spain, which moves slower than the rest of Europe, two men burnt the lamp of religious art after it had almost ceased to exist in the rest of the world. The wave of religion which had swept over Italy, France, and Germany in the thirteenth century, had rolled into Spain and stagnated there. But it produced two of the greatest artists of the world before it sank, Velasquez and Murillo.

The simplicity of Murillo's piety is revealed in the artless manner in which he chose his models for divine personages from the men and women of

THE HOLY FAMILY
Murillo

his country, but he never has to label them to tell us which is Christ and which is a peasant boy. While the later Italian painters found and left a peasant mother and her son and called them "Holy Families," Murillo actually made them holy. Spanish they always are, but holy they undoubtedly are. One of the noblest religious pictures painted from the emotional point of view is that wonderful child Christ in our National Gallery (No. 13).

The heavens are opened to the eyes of the Divine Child, who gazes up at His Father. His mother, with her soul in her eyes, kneels holding one of His little hands, as she adores Him with her mother's worship as well as the creature's adoration. S. Joseph, calling the world to adore Him, kneels on the other side. The Child is neither an infant nor a youth, but is of the age of dawning reason, about seven. It is practically an Epiphany, a manifestation of Christ to the world, and is for the child Christ what Velasquez' greater picture is for the Redeemer.

Religious art reached its climax in Spain in the Crucifixion of Velasquez. Velasquez, the Hercules of art, the strong man who knew absolutely without shadow of doubt the precise tone, shape, and force every touch should take upon his canvas, and always placed it there exactly right, hides his strength from those who know not how

to see, as the powers of nature veil themselves in gauze of cloud and limpidity of water. He is the one man who has dared to paint the utter abandonment of the cry, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

It has been objected by some critics that the figure of Christ on the cross is not that of a man who is suffering agony. Velasquez had no need of writhing muscles to express anguish. What he has done is to show in that rigid figure that it was not the nails which held Christ upon the cross, not the wood and iron of the executioners which fastened Him there, but His own will. His Godhead extends His suffering body on the cross. He is held there by His love, for thus only can the sins of the world be expiated. The spiritual desolation which is the hell of hell, and the portion of the lost, is what bows His head, and in that agony the body is crushed into silence. Humanity is arraigned before divine justice and is *alone*.

This picture seems to me the last great revelation of Christ in art. All that has followed has been on conventional lines, more or less adequate. This picture has a new image to impress, and a revelation of its own, for eyes that can see.

THE CRUCIFIX
Velasquez

CHAPTER X

THE GERMAN AND FLEMISH SCHOOLS

The materialism of the Teuton—The Van Eycks—Memling—Albert Dürer and his love of deformity—Rembrandt—Cranach—Rubens—Christ fades out of art.

LATIN and Celtic peoples, who are fundamentally one in habits of mind and taste, differ from the Teutonic nations in this vital point. The former act on an impulse from *within*, the Teuton acts from impress of outer objects *on* him. The great founders of Italian art depicted Christ from a visual image seen in their souls. The Teuton found a suitable model, and accurately copied him, and more particularly his clothes.

Material comfort is essential to the happiness of the Teuton. To the Celtic and Latin peoples, contemplation, spirituality, and phantasy are of far greater consequence than comfort or wealth; to be *poor* is the Teuton's great horror; to toil with the body so as to starve the soul, the Celtic and Latin extreme of misery.

The Germanic painters were as intensely religious men as the Italians, but they were so

holden down by the traditions of their race and the grossness of their mental fibre that they never wholly succeeded in freeing themselves from the heritage of their flesh, and even the greatest of them found it necessary to express their feeling for Christ by clothing Him in velvet and encrusting Him with jewels. Angelico had no need to sew his Christ's garments with pearls and border His robes with gold to represent His majesty, but worldly magnificence of some sort was essential to the Germanic painter in depicting the Lord of all.

They seem to have regarded Nature through a microscope, which only reveals a small portion at a time, for they were unable not only to conceive their pictures as a whole, but even a figure as a whole. Each fold and jewel of the wonderful garments has as great a significance to the painter as the features, except in the case of Memling, who did concentrate his best attention on Christ in his rendering of the Passion.

With this moderate aim, the exact portraying of garments and furniture, they naturally reached their goal, and not even photography can represent the graining of wood or the specks on an apple more faithfully, hence the immense respect accorded by English people to these German and Flemish artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The commercial value of the velvets

and jewels of Christ's robes can be appraised, and the hairs of His beard counted, and that amply fulfils the artistic ideals of nine people out of ten.

This straining after realism can be seen in its best form in the works of the Brothers van Eyck, van der Weyden, and Memling, and in their hands it attains a sort of sanctity, so painstaking and loving is their rendering of every minute detail. They seem to say in their works that no detail of God's world is beneath the notice of His children, and they faithfully record it. The best and noblest utterance of the northern people's conception of religion can be seen in these great men's works.

In Hubert van Eyck's "Adoration of the Lamb," painted about the year 1426, he goes back to the symbolism of the Apocalypse and of the sixth and seventh centuries. The pierced Lamb is on the altar, surrounded by adoring angels and saints, portrayed with that wealth of detail and that sombre magnificence of deep colour that was essentially northern.

Jan van Eyck may be said to be the epitome of the materialistic ideas of the Middle Ages. He did not trouble himself to alter the received Byzantine type of Christ by dwelling upon Him in his own mind, and he frankly copied the ordinary people of his acquaintance for the Virgin

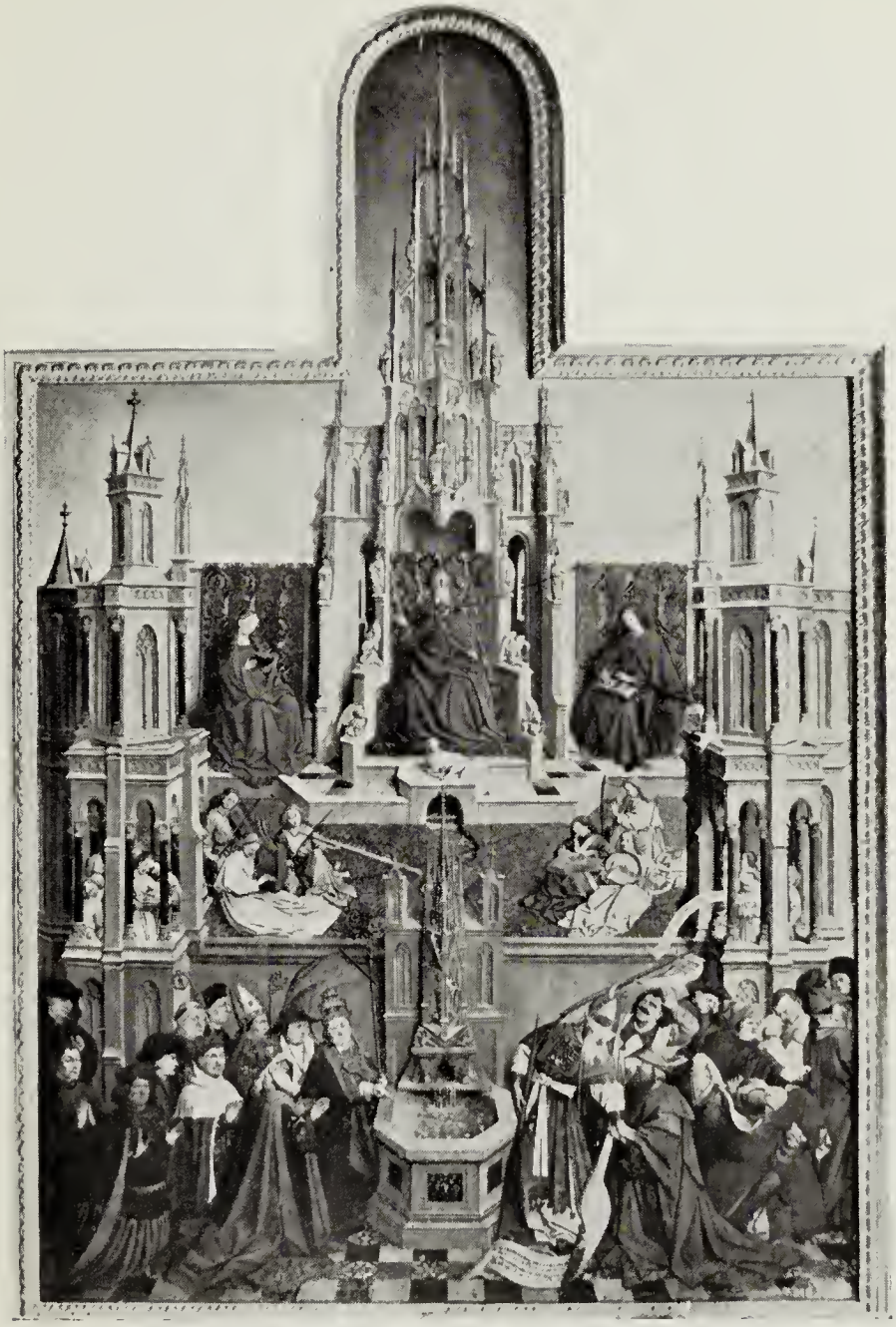
and saints. He was really by nature so great a realist, and with such an immense capacity for detail, that he does not view his compositions as a whole, but as a conglomerate of single figures.

In the National Museum at Madrid is one of those great symbolical pictures which expressed the religious feeling of the fifteenth century in its entirety. It is variously entitled "The Triumph of the Church" and "The Well of Life."

Almighty God is represented as a majestic figure, seated on high under a Gothic canopy, blessing the world; on each side are the Blessed Virgin and S. John the Evangelist reading the gospels. At His feet is the Lamb of God, from whom flows the stream of divine grace into a well, on which are floating the sacramental wafers, passing through heaven, where the angels worship, to the Church of the world, where the Faithful on one side kneel and adore, and the blinded Jews on the other flee in despair and horror.

In its feeling this great picture represents the religious feeling of the fourth century flourishing anew in the fifteenth.

As a painter of Christ not under the form of symbol, Jan van Eyck's "Salvator Mundi," in the Berlin Museum, is his great achievement. The warm glow of oriental colour enhances the Eastern type of face. The magnificent painting of the details claims the spectator's attention



THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH

Jan van Eyck

ECCE HOMO

Van der Weyden

rather too much. It is a noble picture, but not a new revelation of Christ.

Contemporary with Jan van Eyck was Roger van der Weyden, whose influence on art was even greater than the Van Eycks'. To their love of detail he added an intense spiritualism. The world as he saw it was a melancholy place, full of tears and woe, wherein every minute detail was full of tragic earnestness. He seemed plunged into such a profound sense of suffering that not even his infant Christs are other than meagre, and Mary never smiles in response to His caresses. The hard, stern, Flemish materialistic nature working on a naturally pious temperament produced with him, as with Botticelli, a sad and hopeless acquiescence in, and love of, suffering.

In his "Descent from the Cross" Christ falls on to S. Joseph's arm with a fine dead abandonment of utter helplessness. The pathos of the quiescence of death has rarely been so nobly rendered. The women are all ugly and ungraceful, for his intense realism makes him simply copy the awkward figures of the northern Teutonic people, but not a line of his wonderful outlines expresses anything but the deepest and most restrained pathos in this picture.

In his "Last Judgment," in the hospital at Beaune, Christ is a noble, but stiff and severe

figure, with a grave and dignified head, enthroned on the rainbow in the clouds, and clad in abundant drapery. Gravity and dignity are over all this master's works, and there is nothing trivial or careless. Much of the best of his country was exemplified in him, and his immense influence was entirely good. But even in him is to be found a hard northern inaccessibility to foreign influence, for his visit to Italy and the sight of the greatest Italian masterpieces failed to induce him to modify the peculiarly ugly faces and figures of his women.

But greater than Van der Weyden was his noblest pupil, Hans Memling. In him was gathered together all that was noblest and best in northern art, and the greatest artistic qualities of his countrymen attained their perfection in his personality. Abundant as his detail is, it is not over-elaborated to the exclusion of the central idea of the picture, and his rich deep splendour of intense colour, though less intense than the Van Eycks', has greater luminosity.

One of the most poetic works ever painted is his "Vision of S. John," which shows the heavens opened, and the Lord of Glory encircled by a rainbow, surrounded by the elders harping on their harps. Below, men's hearts fail them from fear, and they seek the rocks to hide themselves. Emblematic of man's soul, which in its unity can

THE TRINITY

By Memling. From the Grimani Breviary

embrace the material and the spiritual, the sea in its waves reflects both heaven and earth, and binds them in one. Memling's intense piety is revealed in all his pictures, even his portraits fold their hands and pray. He seems to have been quite unaffected by the unrest of the time, for a deep and steadfast devotion broods over all his works. His favourite subjects were Christ revealing Himself to the world in His Epiphany, and Christ suffering His Passion.

When painting this subject, Memling concentrates his mind so intensely on Christ in such a passion of appreciation that he can scarcely bear to be sufficiently concerned with the executioners to make them lifelike; unlike Dürer, who was as interested in his brutal ruffians as in the object of their rage.

In this marvellous series of Memling's in Turin each incident is like a brilliant gem set in gold, and it has such intensity of devotional rapture that it recalls the work of the best Sienese painters, and it has that same passionate intensity of colour as Duccio's, which gives a glow as of prayer to the master's delineations. As a purely religious painter, Memling ranks with the greatest artists. Microscopic as his painting of detail is, it is never an end in itself, but is the rendering of the best his hand can compass, and an expression of sincerity.

In Quentin Matsys we find some of the last remnants of the religious spirit of the Middle Ages. His Christs are not mere historical personages, nor conventional types, and in his dead Christ, painted for an altar-piece, but now in the Antwerp Museum, we see to what heights the Flemish masters of detail, combined with imaginative conception, can rise.

The rigid body lies in the utter starkness of death ; the awful calm of the dead face with the indelible pain frozen on the features lifts this presentment of Christ to the highest level. Equally fine is the living anguish of Mary, and the likeness between the faces of the living and the dead intensifies the anguish ; more pathetic and beautiful in its severe restraint and intense feeling.

Divine dignity and solemnity distinguish this great artist's "Salvator Mundi," (295) National Gallery. The too great width of the cheekbones and the smallness of the jaw, while characteristically northern, destroy the absolute beauty of the head, but the expression of quiet and noble dignity redeems all shortcomings of feature.

The painter of all others who most adequately represents the German mind is Albert Dürer. He was steeped in the love of scientific detail, of a strong imaginative nature, but hampered, like most of his countrymen, by an irresistible ten-

dency to caricature and grotesqueness, with so little sense of beauty that only once does he represent Christ as otherwise than hideous; sometimes, as in the Passion series, He is even bloated and repulsive. Pure and noble as Dürer's life was, he seems to have been born with this fatal twist of his race. It appears least in his great picture of the Adoration of the Trinity, in Vienna, a dignified and noble picture; an immense contrast to his engraving of the same subject in the large Passion series, which really is an admirable instance of how *not* to depict this mystery. Christ is represented as stark and stiff in death, with hideously contorted limbs, and is held by His Father with *veiled* hands as if Christ were of superior degree. God the Father looks into His face with much the expression that an indulgent father would wear over an exceedingly fractious child, of concern mingled with rebuke. A bird, with the hooked beak of the hawk tribe, flutters overhead. One angel bearing a cross looks with an air of amazement at the stark Christ, while another shakes His arms as if to remonstrate with Him for stiffening Himself so unreasonably.

The too great literalness of the German mind, and the exclusion of the spiritual aspect, is shown in Dürer's representation of the risen Christ wearing the flap hat of a gardener, and carrying a shovel, when He reveals Himself to Mary Mag-

Limbo a demon is actually striking at Christ with a pointed stick, while He draws the redeemed out of their prison. Men, it is true, had failed to see the Godhead, but the devils would at least know the futility of striking the *spiritual* Christ, not in the flesh, as He descended into hell.

Far more commensurate with Dürer's powers is his illustration of Christ taking leave of His Mother, which is full of tender, homely feeling. More exquisite still is a little idyll in the series of the life of the Virgin, where Mary, seated by her Child's cradle beside Joseph at work, is surrounded by chubby cherubs, who assist in the domestic labours of the pair.

One of the first Protestant pictures of the Crucifixion is the one assigned to Lucas Cranach, in the church at Weimar. Beside the cross is a group of S. John Baptist, with Luther, and Melanchthon, both admirable portraits. Luther holds an open book, and is pointing out a passage with a very argumentative expression of face to the Christ on the cross, who, with shut eyes and a weary expression, is *turning his head away*, surely an unconscious irony on the part of the painter, who was an intimate friend of Luther's. Cranach is considered by Kugler as the painter, *par excellence*, of the Reformation; but he calls his sporting scenes and portraits his best pictures. Certainly his rendering of the thorn-crowned

THE HARROWING OF HELL

Dürer

Christ, with the mouth open in complaining anguish, cannot rank with the great religious pictures of the world, though as an expression of intense pain it is masterly.

Among the Dutch religious painters, Rembrandt is the only one who calls for particular notice in this place. A recent critic has complained that the old Italian painters endeavoured to represent Christ as God in man, and he congratulates Rembrandt on representing only the image of a man.

The Christ of Rembrandt is a patient boor, dignified by suffering and exquisitely gentle, even deprecating, as in his "Christ and the Woman of Samaria." He wears the form and features of the Dutch Jew population, among whom Rembrandt lived.

Reverent Rembrandt's work always is, and faithful to the details of somewhat sordid life, which he studied. His limitations give a sad insight into a great man's mind. The study of his secular pictures as compared with his religious reveals how much more interesting to him the ambassadors and ale-house companions were than his Bible subjects, and how little he has cared to dwell on the face of Christ in comparison with problems of light and shade.

His great determination to tell his story strongly, clearly, at one glance, is startlingly

present in his "Elevation of the Cross," in Munich. The agonised figure of Christ is hanging suspended by the nails in the awful moment when the cross is violently jerked forward. The light falls full on it, and concentrates the attention so vividly that it is quite with an effort that the rest of the picture can be attended to. It is not a very well-known picture. It may be that it is too intense and too painful for modern taste.

In his "Christ at Emmaus," in the Louvre, the conception is exceedingly fine, with the light radiating from Christ. Rembrandt's nearest approach to a noble picture is marred by the coarse, low type of the Christ's face. The startled attitudes of the two disciples as the truth dawns on them are strong and simple, and the stupid unconcern of the servant, who perceives nothing unusual in the tavern guests, is quite in accordance with Dutch realism.

The "Christ Blessing Little Children," in the National Gallery, though not by Rembrandt himself, is marred by the same defect. In most of his pictures Christ is given a swollen nose, which, while characteristic of a certain low type of Dutch and German Jew, does not represent a race characteristic of the nation in its higher development.

What Luther calls "Christ's uproarious conduct in the Temple" was evidently in Rembrandt's

CHRIST AT EMMAUS
Rembrandt

mind when he designed his picture of Christ overturning the tables of the money-changers, for it is a most disgraceful scene. Christ is laying about Him with the energy of a hooligan, and men and animals are prostrate around Him in all directions.

The one quality which Rembrandt certainly does impress upon us in his religious pictures is that of naturalness. They depict common men and women doing common things in an everyday manner, and to those people who regard biblical scenes and characters as something belonging wholly to the past they may be of value, but they neither lift the soul to praise, nor the heart to love, nor the spirit to understand.

Rubens, from his workshop in Antwerp, was equally prepared, at a patron's order, to send forth courtesans or Christs ; the former for preference, as possessing greater opportunities for the rendering of the wonderful flesh tints his soul loved.

The difference between the grave Spaniard Velasquez and the voluptuous Belgian is eloquently expressed in their painting of the Crucifixion, both executed about the same time. In the Spanish painter's, the face and head of Christ, as the noblest part of His personality, are the predominant feature. The eye is arrested and riveted by that smitten face veiled by the blood-stained hair, and the mind flies to the contempla-

tion of the mind of Christ passing through the veil of the suffering body to the awfulness of the mental suffering which hid the light of God from his human soul.

In Rubens' picture at Antwerp the undimmed light falls on the fat body, which is quite unscarred by scourging, nor is it tense with pain, and it serves to show how beautiful Rubens felt flesh to be, and how marvellously he could copy its exquisite shades. He was not in the least interested in Christ or His sufferings, and did not desire to express them. It is doubtful if he had any appreciation whatever of anything more spiritual than the flesh. In his rendering of the Descent from the Cross the brawny assistants are in danger of actually letting the body of Christ fall, and His Mother springs forward to arrest the plunge. The face of Christ with its half-opened mouth has not the slightest indication of even manly dignity about it.

Vulgar and indecorous as Rubens is, he does refrain from a false sentimentality; he had coarse animal tastes, and he gratified them in his pictures. How little he ever tried to enter into the significance of religious art is shown by his making the child Christ cling to His Mother in terror while angels lift her into the air, and only Rubens, I believe, has made our Lady throw a coquettish glance at the shepherds as she raises

the covering from the sleeping Christ in a picture of the Nativity.

As Mr. Ruskin says in his *Modern Painters*, "Absolutely now at last we find ourselves without sight of God in all the world. . . . This is an entirely new and wonderful state of things achieved by the Hollanders. The human being never got wholly quit of the terror of spiritual being before . . . but here in Holland we have at last got utterly rid of it all."

After Rembrandt, with very few exceptions, the artistic genius of the North concerned itself with depicting one another's faces or scenes of coarse peasant life. Christ faded out of art, and the scenes of His life were no longer required as a lesson-book for the unlearned, while the rich decorated their own houses with scenes nearer their heart than the life of the Son of God.

CHAPTER XI

MODERN ART

Holman Hunt and his vagueness—Tissot, Heinrich Hoffmann, Fritz von Uhde, Beraud, Thorwaldsen, and Ary Scheffer—The last new representation of Christ—The fanatical Workman of Munkácsy.

ONLY very briefly can we glance at a few of the most representative painters of Christ in modern times. Mr. Holman Hunt, the descendant of the great Flemish realists; Burne-Jones, the worshipper of beauty and the exponent of vague mysticism; Tissot, the student of Palestine; Hoffmann, the sentimental conventionalist; Von Uhde and Beraud, who paint the German and French peasants of to-day. From lack of space other equally representative modern painters, such as Müller, Gérôme, Dagnan Bouveret, and Puvis de Chavannes, and a host of others, cannot even be glanced at.

In the works of Mr. Holman Hunt the difficulty is to see the picture, which is obscured by such a mass of detail that it is almost impossible to view the composition as a whole. His "Light of the

World," noble and beautiful as it is, does not appeal with its full significance to the beholder. The harsh, hard lines of the face are peculiarly unpleasant, and the symbolism is so extraordinarily mixed that its meaning has never been, as far as I know, satisfactorily explained. For if the lantern in Christ's hand typifies the "conscience," as Mr. Ruskin says it does, then it is *outside* the heart, and not within it; and if the lantern means the Light of Christ, then it is not Christ *Himself* who is the Light of the world. The picture betrays that want of accurate theological reasoning very characteristic of modern religious thought. Theology is not a go-as-you-please opinion, and should be treated as scientifically as electricity.

Another instance of this want of spiritual "grip" of the subject is shown in that incomparably beautiful and imaginative picture of "The Triumph of the Innocents." The Holy Family on their flight into Egypt are attended by the souls of the murdered Innocents. The Child sees them, and, beautiful symbolism, holds out to them ears of wheat. Mary and Joseph are both unconscious of the spiritual stream which flows and riots in baby gaiety beside them, but the whole beauty of the idea is marred by a group of sobbing, struggling babes behind, who are apparently unable to keep up with the others. Surely the infant Inno-

cents clustering round their Redeemer should know neither sorrow nor tears.

Much adverse criticism has been passed upon "The Shadow of Death." Christ the Carpenter, in His workshop, lifts His arms, stiff with the fatigue of the day's work, and throws His shadow, as of a crucifix, upon the wall. Mary, His Mother, who has pondered over the mysteries attending His birth, and who is on her knees turning over the gifts of the kings, sees it, and is startled. All the accessories of Oriental life and costume are rendered with irritating exactness, and the glitter of the light on the shavings and on the folds of the linen are as lovingly rendered as the face of Christ Himself. Indeed, it is difficult to see the face of Christ for the multiplicity of unnecessary detail, and what might have been a noble revelation of Christ from the artist's soul is obscured by the petty trivialities of showing how accurately he could paint the curls of wood shavings.

Burne-Jones, the modern Botticelli, has many of the faults and virtues of his greater prototype. Except for his "Dies Domini" and a beautiful and original rendering of the Resurrection, he has rarely painted Christ except as a child. The "Dies Domini" is intensely modern in conception, for it represents Christ as a young, scarcely adolescent youth, sexless, but worn with pain.

DIES DOMINI

Burne-Jones

He is seated amid a flutter of delicately tinted angels' wings. With one arm uplifted, and the other pointing to the wound in His side, He looks with an intense misery of compassion upon the world He judges. In its tired, gentle, pitying pessimism it is an adequate expression of modern vague spiritualistic brooding.

In his picture of the Resurrection he has not desired to give an historical representation of a fact, but he does give a certain actuality to the scene. We look upon the long low tomb from *within* the cave in the rock. Two angels are seated on it, and they hold white robes in awe before their lips. Mary Magdalen has stooped and found the tomb empty, but she has heard the divine voice, and, steadying herself by the rock, she turns and looks at Christ. The beauty of the picture lies with Mary and the angels, for there is no majesty and but little beauty about the figure of Christ.

As an illustration of the *surroundings* of our Blessed Lord's life, the hills, the sea, the streets and lanes of the towns and villages, the motley, gay-coloured Eastern crowds, Tissot's Life of Christ supplies a real want. In the half evil, wholly pathetic, stupid, careless, indifferent throng, human with sympathies, but terribly callous to good, we get an insight into the daily surroundings which must so often have been a

torture to the highly sensitive nerves of the Perfect Man. It is when Tissot tries to represent the Christ that his powers fail. No one can look at these illustrations and believe that Tissot has ever mentally seen the Lord. Compare these pictures with those of the early Italian artists, whose drawing is not to be compared to Tissot's, but who only painted Christ after they had seen Him in the soul.

His original rendering of the finding of the Child Jesus is one of the most satisfactory of his illustrations. In the background are the Temple steps, on which the elders stand, looking, some in wondering meditation, others with sneering contempt at the Child, who with arms outstretched in the form of a cross is led away by His Mother and S. Joseph in devout wonder. The Child's face is full of expression, but is slightly too suggestive of the "pretty boy" type.

Ludicrous as Tissot unfortunately is sometimes, there is a great deal worth pondering over and studying in his work. To cite one of the instances of his poetic thought, the concluding picture of the series is of Mary the Virgin in her old age, kneeling rapt in devout meditation on the hill of Calvary, beside the hole in the rock from which had risen the Tree that bore the Flower of the World.

THE LAST SUPPER
Fritz von Uhde

Heinrich Hoffmann's pictures of the Life of Our Lord, though widely popular, really call for no more remark than do the illustrations of a weekly paper or a monthly magazine. They are pretty and conventional, and gently pious, and quite according to precedent, and have not half the value of the far more thoughtful pictures of Fritz von Uhde.

While Hoffmann could shock nobody by his gentle sentimental following in well-worn grooves, von Uhde might manage to arouse antagonism in the conventionally minded. He has not hesitated to represent Christ as if He were really in the world of to-day, and perhaps there are few things that many nominal Christians would more dislike. In the village school, with the little pinafored children clustered around Him, the grave gentle Figure sits, or on a bench on the hillside, while the peasant women stand and kneel with their babies on the grass beside them, while they listen to the Teacher; much as one can see such poor folk now, round a Calvary in mountain meadows, where people have not yet been taught that money is better than prayer. The simple, straightforward, earnest country-folk, Teutonic in face and gesture, listening, as such folk do listen, to Truth when it is given them, make to my mind far better illustrations to gospel eternities than the posed studio models in "Eastern

costumes" of Hoffmann, and they are drawn in a far greater and more loving spirit of reverence.

They are not violent satires, like the Magdalen in the House of Simon, by Beraud, which represents a modern Parisian dinner-table, round which a scandalised, curious, sneering company of prosperous city men regard with contemptuous jeers a Magdalen in gauzy fashionable ball costume, who has thrown herself at the feet of the conventionally clad Christ, who makes a truly incongruous figure among these overfed city magnates.

Much less offensive, and possessed of a certain weird pathos, is the same artist's Descent from the Cross, where the disciples in modern trousers and blouses lament over the body of Christ, while one blouse-clad workman shakes his fist over the city steaming with factory chimneys at the foot of the hill. The picture is full of lamentation and woe and has a certain dignity of hopeless, impotent pathos.

Thorwaldsen's Christ Blessing, in the Frauenkirche, Copenhagen, has a touch of that sentimentality without which modern art seems unable to represent benignity or graciousness. The face is beautiful and the attitude is very nearly fine and dignified, but not quite. There is an air of "pose" about it which Le Beau Dieu d'Amiens is so absolutely free from. It suggests the studio and a good model.

Ary Scheffer's fine conception of the Temptation of Christ is interesting from the similarity in the type of the devil to that of the ninth-century MS. already alluded to. He represents him as the ideal Greek god in form, plunged in the depths of eternal despair. The figure of Christ looks weak and commonplace, with the usual modern sentimental face, beside this masterpiece of Satan.

A particularly interesting modern representation of Christ is Munkácsy's "Ecce Homo." It represents the development of the Christian ideal as applied to to-day, for it shows Christ not as the Divine Man, nor as the Son of God of the earlier artists, nor the aristocrat of the conventionalists, nor the benign Redeemer and Brother of Chartres, but He is the suffering, down-trodden, labouring democratic Working-man of to-day, with the fierce light born of starvation and ceaseless toil in his fanatical eyes and hollowed, emaciated face. It is the only new rendering of Christ, as far as I know, that modern needs have produced, with the possible exception of the weary Pessimist of Burne-Jones, but Burne-Jones' picture is only a modern and degraded representation of the ideal Greek type of the fourth century.

Munkácsy's Christ is Christ seen under the fierce pressure of modern commercialism, where the weak are pushed to the wall by the strong, in the race for wealth. Men fashion God as they

need Him. It may be that Munkácsy's goaded Workman Christ has a message to grime-laden souls; while the divine benignity of the Christ of the great Italian painters and French sculptors is too beautiful for smoke-dimmed eyes to see. It is, as far as I know, the last individual representative Christ of the age in which it is painted.

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INDEX

NOTE.—The artists occur under the names by which they are commonly known to English-speaking people.

Abgarus V., King of Edessa, portrait of Christ sent to, 33
Amiens, Le Beau Dieu d', 11, 82
Angelico, Fra Giovanni, da Fiesole, 15, 16, 97–103
Ansgar, S., Bishop of Hamburg, supposed compiler of the *Biblia Pauperum*, 10
Apocalypse of S. John, description of Christ in, 21

Bayliss, Sir Wyke, on the likeness of Christ, 20, 24
Bellini, Giovanni, 15, 121–5
Beraud, 166, 172
Berenson, Bernhard, 85, 91
Biblia Pauperum, 11, 12, 85, 126, 158
Botticelli (Alessandro Filipepi), 107, 108
Burne-Jones, Sir Edward, 166, 168, 169
Byzantine Art, 68, 69
Byzantine Manual of Mount Athos, 8, 9

Carpaccio, Vittore, 126
Carracci, Agostino and Annibale, 145
Castagno, Andrea dal, 103
Catacombs, see Rome
Chartres Cathedral, sculptures of, 11, 81, 83
Christ: likeness, 19–35; descriptions of appearance, 21–3; traditional type, 33–5; beardless type, 7, 27, 28, 62, 108; ideal portraits, 27, 28; miraculous portraits, 32, 33; Veronica cloth, 32; Abgarus portrait, 33; Volto Santo di Lucca, 33; holy shroud at Turin, 74

Christ: Life series: in catacomb of S. Prætextatus, 39; Giotto, 86, 87; Fra Angelico, 101–2; Tissot, 169–70; Hoffmann, 171–2

Nativity: Fra Angelico, 101; Botticelli, 107; Rubens, 164

As infant: in catacomb of S. Priscilla, 6; Botticelli, 107; Bellini, 122; Raphael, 137; Correggio, 138–9; Albert Dürer, 160; Rubens, 164

Adoration of Magi: in catacombs, 43; Fra Angelico, 101

Flight into Egypt: Pintoricchio, 116

Presentation in the Temple: Fra Angelico, 101

Finding in the Temple: in MS. of S. Gregory Nazianzen, 77; Martini, 92; Pintoricchio, 116; Tissot, 170

Holy Family: A. del Sarto, 140; Murillo, 147

Baptism: in crypt of S. Lucina, 38; at Ravenna, 64; Fra Angelico, 101; Piero dei Franceschi, 104; Tintoretto, 133

Temptation: in MS. of S. Gregory Nazianzen, 76; Tintoretto, 132; Ary Scheffer, 173

Transfiguration: at Ravenna, 67; Fra Angelico, 97–8, 101; Raphael, 137

Teaching: at Schwarzrheindorf, 80 [161

With the Woman of Samaria: in catacombs, 45; Rembrandt,

In the House of Simon: Beraud, 172

Blessing Little Children: school of Rembrandt, 162

The Tribute Money: Titian, 130

Miracles series: in catacombs, 45

,, Healing the Blind, 45

,, Healing the Paralytic, 45

,, Healing the Woman with the Issue: bronze at Paneas, 25; catacombs, 45; on sarcophagus, 50

,, Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes: in the Cripta delle Pecorelle, 43

,, At Marriage of Cana: P. Veronese, 134

,, Raising of Lazarus, 43; Giotto, 87; Seb. del Piombo, 134

Entry into Jerusalem: Taddeo Gaddi, 88

Cleansing the Temple: Rembrandt, 162

Last Supper (First Eucharist): Fra Angelico, 101–2; A. del Sarto, 140; Leonardo da Vinci, 119

Christ: Agony in the Garden: Fra Angelico, 101; Bellini, 124; Correggio, 139
Betrayal: Fra Angelico, 101
Passion series: Memling, 155; Albert Dürer, 158–60
Buffeting of Christ: Fra Angelico, 101
Before Pilate: Titian, 128–9; Tintoretto, 132
Scourging: Signorelli, 105; Luini, 118; Sodoma, 142
Crowned with Thorns: Correggio, 140; Guido Reni, 145; Cranach, 160
Ecce Homo: Munkácsy, 173
Bearing the Cross: Taddeo Gaddi, 89; Fra Angelico, 101; Pintoricchio, 115; Giorgione, 128
Falling beneath the Cross: Raphael, 138
Taking leave of Our Lady: Correggio, 139
Nailing to the Cross: Fra Angelico, 101
Elevation of the Cross: Rembrandt, 162
Crucifixion: early treatment, 13, 71–4; Duccio, 2; Fra Angelico, 99–101; Castagno, 103; Perugino, 113; Luini, 118; Bellini, 123; Tintoretto, 131; Velasquez, 147–8; Cranach, 160; Rubens, 163
Descent from the Cross: Signorelli, 106; Raphael, 138; Van der Weyden, 153; Rubens, 164; Beraud, 172
Dead Christ: Signorelli, 106; Crivelli, 126; Mantegna, 136; Michael Angelo, 144; Quentin Matsys, 156; Albert Dürer (in Trinity), 157
Pietà: Bellini, 123; Crivelli, 126; Francia, 141
Entombment: Taddeo Gaddi, 89; Fra Angelico, 101; Botticelli, 108; Perugino, 114; Titian, 130
Harrowing of Hell: Fra Angelico, 101; Albert Dürer, 159
Resurrection: Giotto, 86–7; Taddeo Gaddi, 89–90; Fra Angelico, 101; Sodoma, 142; Burne-Jones, 169
Appearance to S. Mary Magdalen: Albert Dürer, 157
Christ and S. Thomas: Signorelli, 106
Supper at Emmaus: Rembrandt, 162
Coronation of Our Lady: Fra Angelico, 101
Last Judgment: Orcagna, 94–6; Signorelli, 106; Michael Angelo, 143; Van der Weyden, 153–4; Burne-Jones (Dies Domini), 168

Christ: Symbolical and mystical representations—
Good Shepherd, 28, 40–42, 48; in crypt of S. Lucina, 41; S. Domitilla, 41; S. Callixtus, 46; in SS. Nazarius and Celsus, Ravenna, 63
Orpheus, 42
Fish, 7, 38, 42
Lamb, 7, 42, 48; Adoration, by H. van Eyck, 151
Vine, 7, 42
Dove, 7
Rock, 7, 42
In Glory: in Basilican churches, 54–8, 61, 62, 69; at Ravenna, 65; Memling (vision of S. John), 154–5
As Youth: Luini, 117
As Pilgrim: Fra Angelico, 99
Salvator Mundi: J. van Eyck, 152; Quentin Matsys, 156
Light of the World: Holman Hunt, 167
Man of Sorrows: Dürer, 15, 158
Well of Life: J. van Eyck, 152
Triumph of the Innocents: Holman Hunt, 167
Shadow of Death: Holman Hunt, 168
Eucharistic Ecce Homo, 14
Le Beau Dieu d'Amiens, 82
Head of Christ: A. del Sarto, 140
Blessing: Thorwaldsen, 172
Winged figures: at Salerno and the Icon *Blagoe Molchanie*, 79
Church, Basilican form of, 55–6; scheme of decoration, 56–7
Cimabue, Giovanni, 84–5
Cistercians, effect of preaching, 82, 84
Correggio, Antonio Allegri da, 138–40
Cranach, Lucas, 160
Crivelli, Carlo, 125–6

Dagnan Bouveret, P. A. J., 166
Dante Alighieri, friendship with Giotto, 85
Dolci, Carlo, 145
Dominicans, effect of preaching, 93
Duccio di Buoninsegna, 2, 10, 16, 91

Dürer, Albert, 15, 156–60

Epiphanius, Monachus, description of Christ, 22
Eucharist, represented by fish and basket of loaves, 38
Eusebius, Pamphili, Bishop of Cæsarea, mention of bronze of Christ and the woman with the issue, 25
Eyck, Hubert van, 151
Eyck, Jan van, 151–2

Farrar, F. W., Dean of Canterbury, on the likeness of Christ, 20; on the Veronica cloth, 32
Franceschi, Piero dei, 104
Francia (Francesco Raibolini), 141
Francis, S., of Assisi, influence on Italian art, 84

Gaddi, Taddeo, 10, 88–90
Genoa, Church of S. Bartolomeo, or Armenian church, portrait of Christ, 33
Gérôme, Jean Léon, 166
Ghirlandajo, Domenico, 109
Giorgione (Giorgio Barbarelli), 127–8
Giotto di Bondone, 2, 10, 84–9, 94–5
Gregory, S., Nazianzen, manuscript of, 76
Gregory, S., of Tours, allusion to manual for artists, 8

Hoffmann, Heinrich, 166, 171
Holman Hunt, William, 166–8

Illuminations, 74–77
Irenæus, S., on the gnostic images of Christ, 19
Ivories, 72–4, 77

Januarius, S., tomb of, 38
Jerusalem, representation in apse of S. Pudenziana, and at Madaba, 55
John, S., of Damascus, description of Christ, 22
Junius Bassus, sarcophagus of, 28
Justinian I., Emperor, portrait in S. Vitale, Ravenna, 66

Lentulus, Publius, letter describing Christ, 22
Leonardo da Vinci, 119
Lippi, Filippo and Filippino, 107
Livia Primitiva, tomb of, 49
Lorenzetto, Ambrogio, 2
Lucca, Volto Santo di, 33
Luini, Bernardino, 117–19

Mantegna, Andrea, 136
Martini, Simone di, 92
Masaccio (Tommaso dei Guidi), 103
Matsys, Quentin, 156
Memling, Hans, 150, 154–5
Michael Angelo Buonarroti, 143–4
Mosaics, 53–70, 78–80
Müller, 166
Munkácsy, Mihály, 173–4
Murillo, Bartolomé Estéban, 146–7

Nimbus, 47–8

Oberzell, Church of S. George at, 76
Orcagna (Andrea di Cione l' Arcagnuolo), 94

Pateræ of gilded glass, 29
Perugino (Pietro Vannucci), 111–15
Peter, S., drawing of Christ attributed to, 21; striking the rock, 42
Petronilla, S., tomb of, 49
Pintoricchio (Bernardino di Betto), 115–17
Piombo, Sebastiano Luciani del, 134
Prasside, S., legend of, 20–1, 54
Pudens, 20–1, 54
Pudenziana, S., legend of, 20–1, 54
Puvis de Chavannes, 166

Quirinus, S., tomb of, 38

Rabbula, Syriac Bible of, at Florence, 74
Raoul Rochette, Désiré, on gnostic images of Christ, 19
Raphael Sanzio, 137–8
Ravenna, mosaics in, 62–7
Reichenau, monastery of, 76
Rembrandt van Ryn, 161–3
Reni, Guido, 145
Rheims Cathedral, sculptures in, 11, 82
Richter, Dr. J. P., on the mosaics in S. Maria Maggiore, 6, 9, 58–60
Rome, catacombs, 36–52
Catacomb of SS. Achilles and Nereus. See S. Domitilla
,, S. Callixtus, 43, 47
,, S. Domitilla, 24, 36, 37, 41
,, S. Lucina crypt, 38, 41
,, Pecorelle crypt, 43
,, SS. Peter and Marcellinus, 48
,, S. Prætextatus, 38
,, S. Priscilla, 6, 36
,, S. Soteris, 46
Church of S. Agnes, outside the walls, 68
,, S. Clement, 78
,, S. Constanza, 62
,, SS. Cosmas and Damian, 2, 60, 61
,, S. Lawrence, outside the walls, 62
,, S. Maria Maggiore, 6, 9, 57-60
,, S. Maria in Trastevere, 78
,, S. Paul, outside the walls, 57
,, S. Prasside, 69
,, S. Pudenziana, 54
,, S. Sabina, 73–4
,, Sistine Chapel, 110
,, S. Stefano Rotondo, 68
,, S. Sylvester, in Capite, 33
,, S. Urbano, 7–8
Rossi, G. B. de, 29, 30, 37, 40
Rubens, Peter Paul, 163–4

Ruskin, John, 86, 133, 165

Saint Gallen, 76
Sarcophagi, 49–52
Sarto, Andrea del, 140–1
Sassoferrato (Giovanni Battista Salvi), 146
Scheffer, Ary, 173
Schwarzrheindorf, church at, 80
Signorelli, Luca, 104–7
Sodoma (Giovanni Antonio Bazzi), 141–2
Speculum Humanæ Salvationis, 11, 81

Theodora, Empress, portrait in S. Vitale, Ravenna, 66
Thorwaldsen, Bertel, 172
Three Children in the Fiery Furnace, 42–5
Tintoretto (Jacopo Robusti), 131–4
Tissot, J. James, 166, 169, 170
Titian (Tiziano Vecellio) 128–31
Torcello, mosaics at, 79

Uhde, Fritz von, 166, 171

Velasquez, Diego de Silva y, 146–8, 163
Venice, S. Mark's Church, mosaics in, 79–80
Veronese (Paolo Caliari), 134
Veronica cloth, 32

Wall paintings, 76–8
Weyden, Roger van der, 153–4

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